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NARRATIVE

OF

A JOURNEY ROUND THE DEAD SEA

AND IN

THE BIBLE LANDS.

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NARRATIVE

OF A JOURNEY

ROUND THE DEAD SEA AND IN THE BIBLE LANDS;

IN 1850 AND 1851.

INCLUDING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE SITES OF

SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

BY F. DE SAULCY,
Member of the French Institute.

EDITED BY COUNT EDWARD DE WARREN.

NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

In the month of July, 1850, a severe domestic bereavement * made me anxious to absent myself for a time from Paris and familiar scenes. Wishing to turn this absence to the best account, I determined to visit, with my son, Greece, Syria, and Asia-Minor. Indeed, I thought that a journey of this kind was likely to complete the education of a young man who had just finished his college course; and I hoped, also, for myself, to find subjects sufficiently new and interesting to be offered to the distinguished Academy of which I have the honour to be a member. We, consequently, commenced preparations for our journey. But whilst meditating on our route, I reflected that it would be no advantage to science were we to tread again the beaten paths already traced by hundreds of other tourists; and that the object of my own travelling

* M. de Saulcy had just lost his wife.—*Note by the Translator.*

[illegible] lost if I did not attempt to visit [illegible] unexplored.

Such being my intention, there was only one course open to us. The Dead Sea and its valley has of late years given rise to many surmises amongst the learned of all nations. All that was told of that wonderful lake—though, from innate incredulity, I thought much of it was mixed up with poetical exaggeration—all that was repeated of the perils awaiting the traveller who might be bold enough to venture on those mysterious shores, strongly stimulated my curiosity. Mystery and danger sufficed to fix my resolution, and I determined to proceed at once to Jerusalem. From thence I proposed to undertake an expedition, the difficulties of which I thought were likely to prove less formidable, on a nearer approach, than they appeared from a distance. I solicited, and easily obtained, from the Minister of Public Instruction in France, permission to travel, at my own expense, with the title of *Chargé d'une mission scientifique en Orient;* and accordingly left Paris on the 28th of September, 1850.

I had at first intended to travel only with my son and

a very dear friend, the Abbé Michon, a scholar and a man of warm feeling; but I soon saw my little caravan successively increased by the addition of three fellow-travellers. Two of them, Messieurs Léon Belly and Léon Loysel, requested to accompany me on my journey eastward. After having first stipulated that I should retain the chief command and sole arrangement of the expedition, I acceded with great pleasure to the proposals of these brave and excellent young men, being perfectly aware that, in the countries we were about to visit, the addition of two determined and active associates would greatly contribute to our security. But, of all my companions, he who was destined to become a second son, to share in all my toils and labours—M. Edward Delessert, was the last to join us. A week before we started, this young gentleman had not the slightest idea that he was about to undertake a journey. At a single glance, I discovered in him the qualities suited to the difficulties and privations of such an undertaking, and I was greatly rejoiced when he joined our little party, though unable then to estimate how valuable his assistance would prove.

Messieurs Belly and Loysel, wishing to visit Lombardy and Venice on their way, had gone on before, and given

us *rendezvous* at Trieste for the beginning of October. We quitted Paris in time to join them. Speeding rapidly by railway through France, Belgium, Prussia, Bohemia, and Austria, we stopped but one day in Berlin, only a few hours in Vienna, and reached Trieste on the morning of the fifth day after our departure. Our two friends arrived there nearly at the same time; and very soon after, one of the Austrian Lloyd steamers took us to Syra, and thence to Athens, where we landed.

A whole month was given to the examination of the Morea. But so much has been written respecting this country, that it is scarcely possible to say anything new on the subject. I need not delay the reader with an account of that painful trip, which had at least the advantage of preparing us for the fatigues we were to encounter in Syria. The climate of Greece is of very questionable salubrity, and, during the whole year 1850, natives and foreigners were alike visited by dangerous fevers. My son, too young to endure the life which travellers must submit to in those unwholesome resting-places called *Khans*, was soon laid up. This threw a gloom over our journey at the very beginning. We hastened back to Athens, where, after a few days' rest,

his attacks subsided. I had hoped we were rid of them; but I made a wrong estimate of the tenacious character of a Greek fever. When we sailed for Constantinople, M. Delessert was taken ill on the passage. Strong doses of quinine restored him; and scarcely had we reached our destination when I was seized myself.

My object in coming to Constantinople had been to obtain firmans which would have enabled me to carry off one of the Assyrian *bas-reliefs* of the Nahr-el-Kelb, which I then thought worth the trouble it would have cost me to have them removed and taken to France. The firman was refused, and I have since had reason to be well pleased with the negative, when I saw this pretended epigraphic treasure, which I had so keenly coveted for our Louvre.

We left Constantinople for Smyrna and Beyrout, touching at Rhodes and Larnaca. When we arrived at Beyrout, we had not abandoned the idea of traversing Asia-Minor, from Smyrna to Trebisond; but, from our first landing on Syrian ground, we discovered that everything around us had as yet to be studied and inquired into—Europeans being utterly deficient with regard to

scientific knowledge in all matters connected with this country. Our determination was immediately taken; and, instead of extending our researches, we decided to concentrate them in Syria, spending such time and money as we could afford, on a soil which promised to repay our labours by an ample harvest of interesting discoveries. It is therefore the Diary of our peregrinations in Phœnicia, Galilee, Judæa, and the biblical lands of Canâan and Moab, that we submit to the general reader.

Am I mistaken in supposing that the narrative of a journey which has left on our minds such a powerful impression, is likely to prove, in some degree, interesting to those who may do me the honour to read it? I know not; but if my hopes have been too sanguine, I trust the reader will forgive me, in consideration of the honest faith by which I have been prompted to do what I thought might be useful to those who may visit Syria after me; in giving them a plain, but clear account of what I have seen, and in pointing out to them the objects I was unable to examine. In either case, I shall find myself rewarded if the perusal of my book has the effect of stimulating others to follow up the inquiries which I have merely begun. Even whilst treading in the steps of the learned

Dr. Robinson, I have gleaned much new and interesting information; and am ready to admit that, in those places I have visited in Syria, there are still many and interesting discoveries to be made by future travellers.

F. DE SAULCY.

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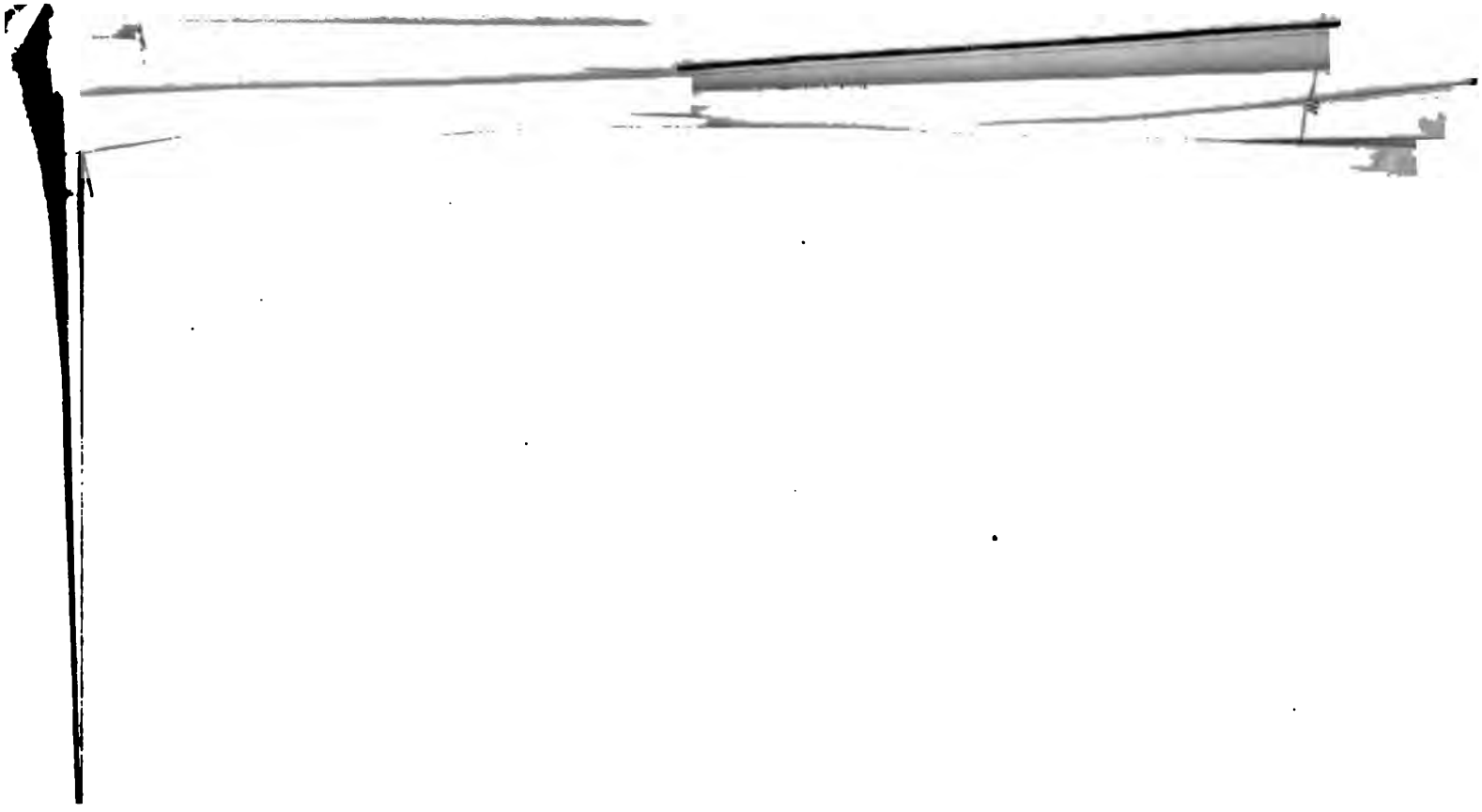

JOURNEY IN SYRIA AND ROUND THE DEAD SEA.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Beyrout.—Difficulty of landing.—Custom-house delays.—Ruins in the neighbourhood.—Syrian rain.—Visit to the French consulate.—Preparations for departure.—Syrian moukris, or muleteers.—The journey commenced.—El-Khaldah.—The prophet Jonah.—Beautiful scenery.—Nabi Younis.—Porphyrion.—Sidon.—Necropolis of Adloum.—Game in abundance.—Antelopes, jackals, and hyenas.—Troublesome companions.—Specimen of a Syrian innkeeper.—Sour, the ancient Tyre.—Ruins and relics of antiquity.

December 7th, 1850.

HERE we are, by seven o'clock in the morning, at anchor within gunshot range of Beyrout. Though it is blowing hard we have been on deck for the last half-hour, with our eyes on the coast which we have so anxiously looked for. All is not quite new however in the scenery before us; it has something of the grave and sleepy aspect of the eastern shores we have already seen at Cyprus and Rhodes, and bears resemblance also to the flowery banks of a lake in Lombardy. Everything is green. The houses as they recede from the centre of the town look like ornamental cottages delightfully buried gst trees. A building in the highest part is shown

to us as the French Consul-General's residence. Dr. Pestalozza, the quarantine physician, who has been already for some years a resident in Beyrout, is kind enough to point out several houses, which we wish to reconnoitre before all others; these are, the various hotels where we may choose to alight, the Consulate, and the residence of my friend Michel Medaouar. Such are my first objects, but when I have got this information, I am at a loss what to think of next.

Two hotels are described as the very best: one at Raz Beyrout, about a mile from the town, the other on the wharf. But this last is wretchedly *Oriental;* the other is too far off. What is to be done? Providence, having undertaken to get us out of the dilemma, kindly sends us a boat, having on board, besides the factotums of these two establishments, a little man, who with a most polite and humble address, entreats us to try a new hotel which he has just fitted up, and where he hopes to have us for his very first guests. It is a venture, but we will try and be the first customers to the Hôtel de l'Univers. By the time all is settled the rain holds up a little, and we are again at liberty to contemplate the land we are about to tread. We see to the left the summits of Mount Lebanon; to the right, as far as the eye can reach, and beginning from the very skirts of the Beyrout gardens, a large zone of red-coloured sand. Whence comes this sand? nobody can tell. How does it act when the wind blows as it does just now? Very mischievously; but nearly as badly when there is a calm, for it still moves on, ever advancing; and in its disastrous progress, which no human power can stop, buries everything under it. Orchards, fields, houses, every object is

slowly swallowed up by this tide which knows no turn. Sooner or later the whole town will disappear under the sands: a melancholy end for the agreeable Beyrout.

We are provided with lodgings: so far well. But we are not yet landed. Very unpleasant stories have been told us of the difficulty of landing. The entrance to the harbour, or that part of the roads improperly called harbour, is not practicable ten days out of twenty. There is nothing to shelter it, and all along there is a sandy bar, which with the slightest wind sends up such breakers, that boats attempting to land are sure to capsize. Dr. Pestalozza would certainly prefer remaining on board to await more favourable weather, were he not anxious to embrace his wife and child, whom he has not seen for the last month. Luckily the gale blows off shore, and the chances are in our favour. So we take leave of the officers of the "Austria," who have brought us thus far, and we make a start towards land. Reaching it without mishap, we alight in high good humour on the Phœnician shore.

We shall not delay the reader with the thousand troubles attending an arrival—which are nearly the same everywhere. But in an inn at its first opening, and in such a place as Beyrout, they are worse than anywhere else. But what is that to us? We are in Syria, on the eve of beginning in earnest a journey attended with every kind of stirring novelty! Such a prospect seems to add fresh spirits to the exuberant gaiety of my light-hearted companions. It is a good omen, and I hail this cheerfulness, for I know that our course cannot always run smooth, and a light heart is a useful companion through a rough journey.

Here's luck to begin with! As we reach the shore, the

first thing we read on the front of a shop is, in French, Café d'Europe. This is probably a rendezvous for rogues from all countries. Never mind, if the people speak French, and can lend us some newspapers not very old. We'll try at any rate.

And so we did. In an hour afterwards we were sitting in the Café d'Europe drinking very poor coffee, smoking cigars a little worse, and finding in the shape of a newspaper nothing but "La Voix du Peuple." Luckily a number of the "Charivari" afforded us some compensation. In the pages and illustrations of this little periodical, we recognised the light-hearted raillery of our fellow countrymen, and we almost felt ourselves at home. But the harsh guttural sounds of the Arab tongue falling upon our ears from every side, soon dispelled the illusion. I made this day for the first time an amusing observation. If you see two Syrians conversing together, whatever may be their religion, be sure they are talking of cash and money matters. You may bet on it and always win, for it is a rule without exception.

Leaving this wretched café, we returned to our hotel, where our host, Mr. Audibairt, had prepared our breakfast. Here for the first time we tasted some bananas of the best kind, as we were told, and a very agreeable fruit they are. But the pulp is rather too soft, resembling ice flavoured with butter, or perhaps more like a pot of pomatum.

After breakfast we went to the French Consul's office. Monsieur de Lesparda received us with the most cordial civility. All that had been said to me in his praise I found was still greatly below his merit. It is impossible to be kinder and more obliging, and I sincerely congratu-

late all countrymen of mine who may have the good fortune to meet this gentleman. He invited us to dine with him next day at the Consulate. Whilst we were conversing in his office, who should come in but my friend Medaouar, who not only knew nothing of our arrival, but had not even heard of our intended journey. He is a noble-minded fellow, generous, affectionate, and high-spirited, whom I had had the good fortune to fall in with, and to prize at his real value, some few months before, when he visited Paris. I had then promised to Medaouar —*un peu en l'air* I must confess, and scarcely thinking I should ever keep my word—that I would some day or other return his visit; and here I am arrived, without notice. For a moment he looked hard at me, to be quite sure there was no mistake, and then we threw our arms on each other's neck, both equally delighted at our meeting again.

Michel Medaouar was born in Beyrout, of one of the best Christian families in that country. Brought up in the College of Antoura, he speaks and writes French very correctly; he is perfectly well read in all our first-rate authors, and altogether his education may vie with that of the best French universities. As to Arabic, his native tongue, he is a complete master of it, and could, if required, fill the chair of the ablest professor. In soul and affection a Frenchman, he has for the last ten years seriously attached himself to the interests of France, which he considers as his country; and he fills at the French Consulate the active but gratuitous appointment of assistant dragoman. It would be very desirable if our government had everywhere so devoted and so highly estimable a servant.

After this visit we proceeded to the custom-house, accompanied by one of the kaouas of the Consulate. Through this man's assistance, by dint of cuffs and coaxing, we contrived to get our arm-chests delivered over to us. Of course the never-failing bakhshish was not to be forgotten, and the custom-house agents drew upon our purses for a small supplement to their regular allowances. We have still a trunk wanting, but we hope to get it when the *tohubohu*, inseparable from the arrival of a new packet, shall have somewhat subsided. Patience, in this country, is a most essential quality; so we will even sit down patiently, hoping that all will go right in time: I don't mean that our patience has not something French in it; for instance, we may be sorely tempted to fly into a passion at the slow proceedings of every official in Turkey, and we leave the custom-house in no very good humour. However, we go back to the hotel, and there we get our fighting gear. Everything is in good order, and our arsenal is a formidable one; double-barrelled guns, swords, pistols of all sizes, powder, caps and balls, everything is complete, and with such an equipment, we are ready for any emergency.

Thus satisfied with our preparations, we go out for an airing in the country. Leaving Beyrout by the Saydah gate, we follow the sea-shore, passing before a theatre which they are just now building for an Italian Opera. The whole structure is to be made of wood. The weather is now fine, with a splendid Syrian sky. A walk in this direction is quite delightful. The road lies along the sea, which it constantly overhangs, whilst the waves come dashing against the rocks below. Amongst these rocks, one may trace everywhere signs of the ancient

Berytus; but these remains are daily disappearing, worn away by the sea. In the harbour itself there are some broken columns constantly beaten by the surge, and covered with sea-weed. In other places appear, cut out of the rock, what were formerly the foundations of opulent mansions. Of the various monuments erected on the sea-shore, only one has left ruins of any importance; it goes by the name of the *Theatre*, and is unquestionably a basilica of great antiquity, flanked by a line of square tanks, excavated from the rock, and now full of salt water. A little further on, a small bay with some Arab barques hauled up on the sandy beach, seems to have been one of the havens of the old harbour of Berytus; these barques, thus hauled up, bring back to our recollection the customs of the mariners in ancient times. Such was the sailorship of the Phœnicians; such is still the practice of the inhabitants of Beyrout. There has been no change in the habits of the people of this country; and this observation, which we are now making for the first time, we shall have occasion to repeat again and again.

The road we are following is lined with cafés, where Turks and Arabs smoke the narghileh and chibouk with unparalleled gravity. All are very polite, for our salams, which are not always expected, are invariably returned; and sometimes they give us the first greeting. Decidedly this country is more civilised than Constantinople.

After an hour of profitable walking—for we have already collected a number of plants, shells, and insects—we return to our hotel, quite delighted with our first day's work. The sun is just setting, and the town gates will

shut the moment his disc disappears; so we must turn back in good time. Coming home, just as the muezzin summons the believers to evening prayer, we hear for the first time a strange charivari of bugles, trumpets, and drums; thrice it stops to begin again, and ends with a loud huzza. The Turkish garrison, whose barracks are close to our inn, are praying for their Sultan. All this is quite new and amusing.

The remainder of the day passed away pleasantly enough, in quiet chat on all that we have already observed, and in fond recollection of the friends we have left behind us. To-morrow we hope to see more, and in the meantime we anticipate with great pleasure a night's rest without the accompaniment of rolling and pitching. But, alas! sleep is no easy matter in Syria; and we have already a foretaste of the nights we are to expect in this country.

December 8th.

During the night the wind has gone round to the northward, and this morning the sky is beautifully serene. We hasten to write to our friends in France; though our letters, they say, will not leave this for a week. We don't care, for it seems to us as if by writing at once of our safe arrival, our friends' anxieties will be sooner removed; and so we refuse to listen to any delay.

After breakfast we start again; but this time we take our route towards the Nahr-e-Beyrout, that is, in a direction opposite to the beach we reconnoitered yesterday. The heat is awful; and the sun seems to us to be more tyrannical than he has a right to be, considering it is the 8th of December: flowers are to be seen every-

where ;—decidedly spring is coming on apace, and we begin to fear the effect of such a climate while pursuing our journey. It turned out afterwards, much to our cost, that this fear was groundless ; for to judge of the remainder of Syria by Beyrout is rash and hasty. But if we were mistaking the future, we enjoyed the present.

From the town to the river the road passes, at some hundred yards from the sea-shore, through a well-cultivated country, planted with mulberry-trees. Near the town the road is much cut up and muddy, on account of the rainy season ; but a mile further it improves, being less frequented. Before reaching the river bank, on our left-hand side, we come to a square solid ruin : the rough blocks of which it is constructed seem to refer this building to the Roman period, and the popular belief attaches to it the legend of St. George and the Dragon. It is here the monster was killed. A large brown spot is visible on the gray wall. Do you wish to know how it came there ? The saint, after his victory, found it necessary to cleanse his hands from the blood with which they were stained. It is this blood, mixed with soap, that has left the unsightly spot on the venerable ruin. A little further on, a small chapel has replaced a house where the warrior rested after his bold adventure, I give this legend as it was related to me by the guide, who showed us the way ; but I am not responsible for the truth of the story.

On reaching the Nahr-e-Beyrout we found a bridge, lately built, with double balustrades and several arches. But Turkish neglect of everything connected with means of communication, already allows this bridge to go to

ruin ; the platform being in a very dilapidated state, and consequently unpleasant to horsemen and beasts of burthen.

To-day we have again increased our collections of natural history ; and, after several hours passed in those lovely valleys overshadowed by splendid palm-trees, we return to Beyrout, and prepare to avail ourselves of the kind invitation we have received from Medaouar. He has promised to give us an Arab dinner ; and we look forward with no little satisfaction to the idea of tasting something quite new in the shape of cookery. It was sunset when we arrived at his habitation, a very fine one, with a reception-room ornamented with a balcony immediately overhanging the sea. We sat admiring from the terrace the splendid lights and shadows of a setting sun on the Lebanon. The mountain, all white with snow, assumes a beautiful pink colour, which soon passes to violet ; then, again, everything is dark in a few minutes, for in this country there is scarcely any twilight, and the day springs into light or vanishes into darkness much more rapidly than in our northern climate. After having enjoyed for some time the magnificent evening, we turned to appreciate the culinary talent of the Arab *cordons bleus.* Their productions appear strange enough to us Europeans ; but after all they are not so bad, and Brillat Savarin himself might have been contented, with the mahchi, the coubbah, and the baklaouah of Medaouar's first-rate cook. Of course I am merely giving the names of the dishes without pretending to explain their composition. According to etiquette, we preluded the dinner by a cup of coffee and a chibouk ; after dinner we again resumed our smoking and coffee, and by nine o'clock we were back to our lodgings.

December 9th.

The wind has gone off again to another point; and though the weather is now very uncertain, I go out early for a work which I am anxious to accomplish. It would be interesting to have a collection of ground-plans of all those ancient ruins which we have descried along the sea-shore. But after several hours' hard labour, I find I must give up a task which would take me more days than I can possibly command. On leaving France I promised to myself that I should certainly attend the Christmas solemnities at Bethlehem. But to keep this engagement I must be at Jerusalem by the 24th at the latest; and I should never forgive myself, were I to miss, for some sketches of trifling importance, a ceremony which I shall probably never have a chance of seeing again.

As I strayed away from the town further and further, hoping to reach at last the end of the ruins, I fell in with other vestiges equally numerous. I concluded that it was useless to pursue a work that I could not possibly finish. Besides this difficulty, showers—Syrian showers—come pouring down one after the other. Vainly I take shelter sometimes behind a large rock—sometimes under an old doorway; my paper gets soaked, I am soaked like my paper, and obliged at last to return home much against my will.

After breakfast I go out again to the beach; but this time intending to get merely a plan of the basilica. My friend the Abbé accompanies me; and we begin sketching together. In less than two hours we get through our work, though not without running a hundred risks of breaking our necks in walking on the broken rocks, which the sea has covered with a slimy vegetation, upon which

the foot slips as if it was soaped all over. All that remains of the monument is the bare skeleton: the outside walls, originally faced with freestone, have disappeared, carried off very likely by those who have built the modern houses of Beyrout. To them these ruins were an available quarry close at hand; and Turks would have considered it downright folly to go and cut out stones in the mountain when they had these quite ready within reach. Some of the foundation-stones have alone remained, fitted and grooved into the rock, probably because they were not wanted elsewhere. The building is no doubt of great antiquity, judging of its age by the size of the materials. What constitutes the ruin of the basilica, as it stands just now, is merely the core of the old walls. This core is made up of three layers of masonry, close to each other, but perfectly distinct in their arrangement and composition. A long quadrangular room, terminating towards the sea by a circular apsis resting against the inward wall,—such is the general disposition of the building. The side-walls close in towards each other at an angle, the head of which, were it not rounded off, would be in the axis of the room. Outwardly the wall is strengthened by a foundation of solid masonry, and of such superior quality that it has resisted for centuries the utmost fury of the waves. The rock below has given way, whilst the artificial buttress is still untouched.

To the left of the basilica there still exists a quay of Roman architecture, but it has suffered much from the surge. To the right, as I mentioned before, there is a line of square tanks, which the people here suppose to have been baths, and which probably have only been cellars used as storehouses. Formerly these tanks had no

communication with each other; but now the rock seems to have been perforated by the salt water, and the sea goes in and out alternately, as each succeeding wave dashes up the beach, or falls back again. One of the channels excavated by this continual movement, presents a strange phenomenon. The water, in rushing up the narrow conduit, expels with great force the air contained in it, which again immediately fills up the void when the water retires; and thus the effect produced by this strange cavity can only be compared to the blowing of an immense pair of bellows in a blacksmith's shop.

Reverting to the old building, we may be asked, what was its former destination? It is scarcely possible to attribute to it any other use but that of a basilica, a large public hall, where the Phœnician merchants were in the habit of congregating, probably for commercial transactions. It may have been the exchange of the Berytans. At any rate, if it is not possible to point out with certainty the precise use of this edifice, it may be safely asserted that it was *not a theatre*, for it is quite unlike any other building of that kind; and besides, it could have admitted only a very small number of spectators. At all events, the structure must have been costly, for the ground is strewed with fragments of precious marble, and the entrance at least has been inlaid with mosaic work, although coarsely executed. The red and white cubes which compose this mosaic are of unequal sizes; they do not form any well-defined figures, but rather a kind of irregular pavement, of which we saw afterwards some other specimens in ruins of buildings much anterior to the times of the Greeks and Romans.

This mosaic, scarcely concealed by a thin layer of earth,

forms still the floor of the entrance. It was the Abbé who first discovered it. In his enthusiasm he hastened to clear away the rubbish from one of the largest pieces he could get, with the intention of carrying it off. I will anticipate a little by saying at once that, next morning, very early, notwithstanding the hostile clamours of some passers-by, he succeeded in his undertaking; but not without exciting the suspicion of the Turkish authorities, who cannot imagine that French travellers should look into the earth for anything but gold. A rumour immediately spread through the town that the poor Abbé had carried off I know not how much treasure. The Pacha was alarmed. He sent a detachment of soldiers and some officers to inquire into the fact, and to rake up the ground pointed out as concealing such unexpected riches. The good people, on finding nothing but flints, persuaded themselves either that we were mad, or that we held intercourse with the devil, through whose assistance we had carried off everything precious the place contained, leaving behind only the worthless pebbles. This is no jest of my own invention, and assuredly the last hypothesis was the one decided on by these intelligent gentlemen.

Returning home from our excursions, we think of going to the Consulate, where we are expected. As it has rained all day, the roads are almost impassable, so we avail ourselves of the only means of conveyance at our disposal, by sending for horses; and when it is quite dark, we set out, preceded by a servant of the hotel, holding one of those paper lanterns which you must never forget to carry about in any Turkish town, if you wish to avoid the risk of being seized by a patrole or devoured

by pariah dogs. As soon as we have cleared the town, we get entangled in narrow paths, some of which seem to be cut out of the rock like a flight of stairs; others are knee-deep in sand, and all are lined with regular walls of cactus, or prickly pear. I confess we were exceedingly anxious to avoid any encounter with this Syrian substitute for a green bush, for nothing is more disagreeable than the pricking of the thousand needles with which the inhospitable plant is bristled. At last we reached the Consulate without having our eyes scratched out. We had been already kindly received by M. de Lesparda, and his family, emulating his cordial politeness, contrived to make us forget that we were no more in France. All the members of the Consulate had been invited to do us honour, and we passed a most delightful evening. When in the wild deserts, we shall often recal the memory of the little French colony of Beyrout.

Every one here is more or less of an antiquary; we therefore greatly admired several choice specimens collected by the care of M. Perretié, the chancellor of the Consulate. He has formed an ample selection of rarities; and some of the antiquities in his cabinet might be envied by the richest European museums. At half-past eleven o'clock, just as if we were in our mother country, we returned to our lodgings by the same road, taking the same precautions as when we came.

December 10th.

It rains this morning so heavily that there is no getting out; I therefore try to make a fair copy of the sketch we took yesterday, whilst I wait for the sky clearing up a little. But I wait in vain. Our new friends in Beyrout come to pay us a visit; after which

we go to the custom-house to hunt for our missing trunk. By patient searching we find it at last under a pile of goods. Towards four o'clock we are joined by Medaouar. Speaking to him about ancient inscriptions, I inquired if there are any to be met with in Beyrout? He tells me a pedestal has been lately found in his own garden, with a long Latin inscription upon it. During a lull in the weather we run to the spot and take an impression of this legend hitherto unheard of, and then return in all haste to the hotel, for shelter against the rain that comes pouring down again just at the most troublesome moment; I mean when we are busy copying the characters from the stone. From these characters it appears that the inscription is posterior to the time of Septimius Severus. It tells us that a certain husband, called Rufus Artorianus, erected, at his own expense, a marble statue to his wife, the most pious and chaste of women; and adds that he has done so as an example. Of what is it to be an example, and to whom? to the ladies, or to the gentlemen of his time? he does not tell us. If the lesson is addressed to the ladies, M. Artorianus is ungallant; if to the husbands, he is a coxcomb. Why should he announce in his commemorative phrase, that he has had no other object in erecting that statue than to hold up an example? Could he not sincerely regret a good and kind wife without making himself ridiculous? But I am chattering about what does not concern me, and it is raining all the time.

December 11th.

The rain continues still, and yet we must start, if we intend being at Bethlehem on the 24th. The day is long

and tedious; and we feel as impatient as if we had been imprisoned for six months. Towards three o'clock the rain seems to abate a little, and rather than continue shut up in this dismal place, we make a dash in the direction of Raz-Beyrout, but not without being obliged to take shelter more than once in an Arab café, long enough to give Phœbus an opportunity of showing himself, if he were so inclined. But he continues sulky, and we proceed on our walk without him. We explore some new rocks near the sands, and we find there unmistakable signs of ancient structures—cisterns and wells of no great depth, but clearly defined. Night comes upon us unawares whilst we are still busy collecting shells and insects, and we have to go home in a hurry. The clouds seem to separate. Let us hope the omen is favourable.

December 12th.

Impossible to tarry here any longer. Whatever may turn up, we must be off. Yesterday two young Frenchmen, who came with us by the "Austria," have set us a good example; they have started for Jerusalem, and no doubt they have stopped this night at Saydah. To-morrow we shall take the same course. We must have fair weather at last, though it blows very hard just now. But the wind is in-shore; if it turns to the northward, we may reckon safely on several fine days. The sea roars in such a style that we can hear it from our room as distinctly as if we were on the beach. We pack up our things, dismissing all superfluous articles, and retaining only what is absolutely necessary. A horse-dealer is introduced with horses and mules to let. We bargain with him for the number of animals we require to ride and to carry our luggage; twelve piastres a-head on marching

days, six piastres when halting; such is the usual rate. Luckily we have brought with us our own saddles; the Turkish saddle would soon have disabled us. I expressly recommend to any traveller going out to Syria to bring with him this most necessary article in his equipment.

Our staff is now complete. During our stay in Athens we unfortunately engaged as a cook an animal called Constantine, who served in that capacity during our expedition in Greece. He is the most perfect sample of the Greek rogue, of all rogues the most accomplished; a cringing, fawning, sneaking, knave. In Athens, again, we also engaged, through pity rather than because we wanted him, a tall Levantine valet, born of French parents, by name André Reboul. He pretends to act as our dragoman or interpreter, though he only knows Greek, Turkish, Russian, and French,—languages which happen to be perfectly useless in the country we are going to travel through. He has equipped himself as a Turk, and has taken into his head to put on red garments, which make him look quite hideous. He gives himself great airs, such as might suit the chief butler or major domo in a rich family; and under pretence of controlling M. Constantine's purchases, buys away in great style for us, but without consulting any one. On the whole he is a good sort of fellow, making much fuss, doing what he has to do indifferently well, but approving only of what he has done himself. To fill up the list of our attendants, Edward Delessert and Loysel have brought with them each a faithful and devoted servant, and these brave fellows are considered by us as real friends, rather than as mere followers. Both have taken a great fancy to natural history; and if there is any new or precious specimen to

be found, Philippe or Louis is sure to discover it. Master Constantine, who, from the terms of our agreement, speculates on plundering us of money enough to keep a servant to himself (that is, a man whom he will treat as a galley slave, whilst he compels him to do nearly all his own work)—Master Constantine, I say, has taken with him a Macedonian Greek, called Nicholas, an honest fellow in the main, and not deficient in courage, but too much of a drunkard. The creature is dressed in his national garb, now nearly white, but which we shall see, no doubt, passing through all the colours of the rainbow, especially the darker colours.

We are all ready, having taken such money about us as we deem sufficient for our journey, and with our *tiskreh*, or Turkish passports, in our pockets. To-morrow we start early in the morning. We spend the remainder of this day in making our farewell calls. The weather is fine at last, and Providence seems to smile on our enterprise.

December 13th.

The man who has not begun a journey, having to depend on Syrian muleteers (moukris), can have no idea how angry he can be with his fellow men without breaking every bone in their bodies. At seven in the morning we are quite ready; the sky is beautifully clear. Well, let us be off! Wait a little: the mules are not yet loaded, the horses are not harnessed. Patience! Another hour goes by; again the same story. At nine we feel hungry, and to divert our ill-humour, we make up our minds to breakfast in Beyrout, expecting to get on horseback immediately afterwards, and to make up for the time lost by marching on without a halt. We have just emptied the

stirrup cup. Everything must be ready now, so let us go down Oh! the wretches. There they are, chattering, or rather bawling, as if they thought each other deaf; but not a beast is loaded. Everyone seems to think his neighbour is to do his business for him. As we should never start at this rate, we begin to get angry. They take this opportunity to ask us for a bacshish (a present). We give them plenty of abuse and some thrashing. Little by little, however, through keeping our eyes upon them, we get the muleteers to load our beasts. Every bundle is packed; we are fortunate indeed! Well, we are off this time! Stay a minute. Master Constantine has bought so many good things for our table, that he must have two more mules, which he wants us to pay for. This time it is rather too much of a good joke, so we leave our scoundrel to get out of the difficulty as he best can, and set out at last at half-past eleven. It has taken something like five hours to load and harness twenty horses and mules: a very promising beginning. If we are to have the same comedy every day, we may chance to reach Jerusalem in a month.

Once *en route*, our ill-humour gradually gives way. We leave the town by the gate leading to the Saydah and Damascus roads, proceeding first eastward, and then turning off to the south. Before taking this last direction, we pass through a pine-forest, which was planted long ago, as the story goes, by a certain Emir Fakhr-oud-deen, to stop the progress of the encroaching sands. The idea was an excellent one; but wood for building is very scarce in this country, and it was a great convenience to find it close to the city gate; so all the finest trees were successively cut down by the Turks, and it is only

within these few years that new plantations have been undertaken.

Once in the sands, all vegetation disappears; though some pretty little coloquintidas, green and yellow, will sometimes appear above ground, while their stalks creep along, buried in the sand. We find, also, here and there, some small green patches, produced by a pretty cruciform plant, with a large pink and white flower. Our horses get on very slowly, and seem to undergo great fatigue; we are therefore inclined to be merciful and compassionate to them; when, about an hour after starting, and just as we had crossed a small river, called the Ouad-el-Rhadir, my son's charger shows us all of a sudden that he is not particularly tired; for the saddle having been loosely girthed, turns; the beast soon gets rid of his rider, kicks off crupper and accoutrements; when free of every impediment, takes two or three rolls on the sand, and then bolts off at a hard gallop towards Beyrout. So much again for our bad luck. We should have felt greatly annoyed by this forced halt at the Khan-el-Rhadir, were it not that it afforded us the opportunity of collecting an ample harvest in objects of natural history.

Saïd, one of our moukris, has galloped off in pursuit, and we are not without hopes that the fugitive may be stopped on the road by our baggage-carriers, supposing, however, that Master Constantine has at last finished his preparations. In about an hour, Saïd returns to camp with the fugitive horse, and some minutes afterwards, we are off again.

At three, we reach the Khan-el-Khaldah, a miserable specimen of a khan, built on the beach, opposite to a low

accessible ridge of rocks, among which we descry some ancient sarcophagi. We have scarcely two hours' daylight left, so it is quite impossible to reach Saydah this evening, and we had better stop where we are to examine the necropolis before us.

Just as we arrive, we perceive a troop of very good-looking Arab horsemen, hawking, some hundred yards in front; but whilst we deliberate if we are to select El-Khaldah for our first resting-place, they ride off. No sooner dismounted than we run to the sarcophagi: we had imagined there were only a few of these, but the whole hill-side is covered with them; all broken and violated; not one to be found uninjured. Wherever the rock juts out it has been cut into a tomb. Sometimes there are long piles of these stone sepulchres, with their covers broken to pieces, or lying upset on the ground.

Behind the khan there are heaps of ruins, which indicate the situation of an ancient city. One might suppose it to have been of no great importance, were it not that the immense number of sarcophagi collected together close by, would prove the contrary. Then, again, it is too great a distance from Beyrout to imagine that El-Khaldah should have been merely the necropolis of that town. We must therefore conclude that El-Khaldah stands on the site of some Phœnician city.

Whilst our friends are all busy, looking out for plants, insects, or game, Edward and I turn our attention to the necropolis. We discover a Greek funeral inscription, but so worn by time, that it is impossible to make out the characters: the name of Juliana, is all we can decipher. Going up southward, we cross the bed of a torrent by

means of a bridge, formed of a single rock, thrown from bank to bank. When you have crossed this bed, the piles of sarcophagi reappear just as numerous as on the other side. One of these is most remarkable. Upon one of the sides of the stone coffin, the head of which is completely broken off, we find a bas-relief, in pretty good style, representing a winged genius, with two full-face busts to the right and left. Unfortunately all this is much mutilated; but nothing can be more imposing than the aspect of this tomb, the lid of which is still entire, and covers what remains of the coffin, although it has been violently displaced from its original position.

Night coming on, very much to our regret, puts a stop to our rambles. We return to the khan. Our luggage is arrived, and Constantine is at work. André has dressed our camp-beds in two horrid cells, dirty, and full of vermin; but we must be content perforce; and so we are, content and merry.

Before the door of our sleeping apartment, and resting against the wall, is a small shed, open to the wind on three sides; this is our dining and writing-room. Though the wind is high, and nearly blows out our candles, we persist obstinately in taking notes, and retouching our drawings with Indian ink. Of course we make but slow progress; and when we are called to dinner, our work is far from finished. Whilst we are dining, a long caravan of Greek pilgrims, proceeding to Jerusalem, come up to the same halting-place. Men, women, and children, and all sorts of animals, bivouac confusedly in the open air close to us. Nothing can be more picturesque than the sight of this encampment with the fantastic figures moving before the light of the large fires.

Danville's map indicates at the very spot where we have halted, an ancient city, called Heldua. In the "Pilgrim's Progress from Bordeaux to Jerusalem," * there is also mentioned a place of the same name, distant twelve Roman miles from Berytus, and only eight miles from Porphyrion. The Rev. Dr. Robinson supposes that these two numbers have been misplaced and reversed; and it is very likely he is in the right. There can be no doubt that the modern name of El-Khaldah may be exactly identified with Heldua.

After the miserable dinner served out to us by Constantine, for which he charges us sixty francs, though certainly it has not cost him five, we complete our diaries as fast as we can, and turn into bed. Positively the khan of El-Khaldah is an objectionable resting-place. But we have begun campaigning, and must bear all that happens without a murmur.

December 14th.

With the first glimpse of daylight, part of our little band is already up and in action. Of course there are some late sleepers, those, for instance, who need more rest because they are the youngest of the party. As there is no immediate necessity for rousing them, let them enjoy themselves. The Abbé is the most active of us all. When he chooses to sleep no one sets to it in better earnest; but when he imagines, right or wrong, that daylight is coming, he listens to no remonstrance; no abuse even will stop him. So I find him on the beach before daylight, looking for shells and marine plants.

The pilgrims of the caravan are already moving off, and

* "The Pilgrim's Progress from Bordeaux to Jerusalem," written in the year of our Lord 333. (Note by the Translator.)

we have not yet caught a glimpse of any of our moukris; but the necropolis on which we stand is so very interesting that I am in no hurry to leave it; the more so as we wish to have an impression of the bas-relief already mentioned. We set to work; unfortunately it is necessary to fold together such a quantity of moist paper to take in all the outline of the carving, that we shall never succeed in making it hard enough to bear off the stamp. We collect some dead wood, and make a fire to dry the paper, but with very little success. Not to mention again this unfortunate stamp, upon which we lost so much labour, I will say at once that it was a complete failure, and that the first time we examined it, we only found a cake of papier mâché, without the slightest appearance of an impression on it.

This morning we contrive to gain two hours in our preparations for starting. By nine o'clock everything is ready. We take a cup of coffee, smoke a chibouk, and move off with splendid weather, which reminds us of the month of July in our own country.

The road we follow lies almost entirely along the sea-shore, and we do our best to make our horses tread in the water, the wet sand giving them a firmer footing. After passing before the village of Deir-en-Naïmah, and leaving on the heights to our left Deir-el-Kamar, formerly the residence of Emir Bechir, we descry the hamlet called Mehallakat-ed-Damour, and we reach the bank of the Nahr-ed-Damour, the Tamyras of the ancients. This is a rather large and rapid river, which it is sometimes impossible to cross when it suddenly rises in the rainy season. There was formerly a bridge, of which the ruins only are to be seen a few hundred yards from the ford.

We find here some fellahs who have no other occupation but that of leading by the bridle travellers' horses, they entering the river with the water up to their arm-pits. These poor people receive a piastre for their service, and really they well deserve their salary. We had been looking forward with some anxiety to the difficulties of this passage on account of the rain which had detained us several days in Beyrout. But if the Damour swells, and becomes dangerous in a moment, it subsides as quickly; and as we cross it is quite fordable; the water does not come more than half-way up the horses' girths, and we reach the opposite shore all safe. The banks of the river are very pretty and green, and we almost regret leaving the sweet meadows watered by the Damour. Inclining a little to the eastward, we increase our distance from the shore, so as to avoid the pass of Ras-ed-Damour, which would lengthen our journey. We pass through fields admirably cultivated, the property of Emir Bechir, and we reach a khan on the sea-shore, called Khan-en-Nabi-Younis.

According to tradition, it was at this place that a sea monster threw up on the beach the prophet Jonah, punished by three days of strange imprisonment for his lukewarmness in obeying the commands of Jehovah. A oualy, or small Mussulman chapel, called Nabi-Younis, stands to the left of the khan. Behind it are some fellah cottages; they have a better appearance than the houses we usually see in Arab villages; and close to the road, in the hamlet, we find several broken shafts of beautiful columns. These are undeniable tokens that a large town formerly existed in the neighbourhood. To the right of the khan there is a delightful bower of *kharoubiers*, several

hundred years old; before it, the loveliest shore, and the Phœnician sea. The weather is delightful; the prospect animated by the constant passing of the caravans going towards Beyrout or St. Jean d'Acre; the sky deep blue, the sea kissing the shore, instead of beating against it; date-trees, Arab horsemen, camels, a golden sand;—all this fashioned by the hand of the Almighty in the most beautiful framework of nature—such is Nabi-Younìs. Of course we were unwilling to leave this lovely spot. But half an hour was all the time we were allowed to admire, though it was hard to tear ourselves away from such a scene. Our two artists were in raptures, and declare they will return with their pencils to this delightful place. They kept their word.

What can have been the ancient city which its founders conceived the noble idea of erecting on this spot? Some people have supposed that it was Porphyrion, first mentioned by Scylax, and which afterwards became a suffragan bishopric, dependent on Tyre. We have extracted from the "Pilgrim's Progress to Jerusalem" * a passage, which places Heldua between Beyrout and Porphyrion, twelve miles distant from the first-named town, and only eight miles from the second. Agreeing with the learned Dr. Robinson, we have identified Heldua with El-Khaldah. If this identification is correct, the numbers must have been exchanged by some ignorant copyist; and Nabi-Younìs corresponds, then, exactly with Porphyrion, since the distance between Beyrout and Nabi-Younìs is precisely twenty Roman miles. The presence of those splendid fragments of ancient monuments which we have found on the spot, is another argument in

* "Itinéraire de Bordeaux à Jerusalem," translated and published by Miller.

favour of this explanation, which was first suggested by Pococke.* It seems therefore that Reland was mistaken when he looked out for Porphyrion towards the foot of Mount Carmel, on the other side of the Gulf of Acca. I shall add but one word more on this subject: the name of Porphyrion was given to the Phœnician town on account of the (πορφύρα) purple shell fishery, which was probably successfully carried on along the neighbouring coast. However, I propose to discuss at a future time the geography of the Phœnician coast.

It is past three o'clock when we leave the Khan-en-Nabi-Younìs, following again the shore whenever we can possibly do so. Behind us, and nearly in a line with the khan, we leave the village of El-Djyah, built on a hill-side. The heat is excessive, and at times we stop to slake our thirst with water, when we are lucky enough to fall in with a spring; for instance, at Khan-aïn-es-Sekkeh, on the road between the two villages of Er-Ramlieh and Djoun, which we descry successively half-way up the valley to our left. Opposite to the first-named of these villages we cross a ravine, at the bottom of which a very small river, called the Nahr-er-Ramly, disappears. A little further on we come to the Nahr-er-Oualy, which we ford, the stream being very shallow.

As daylight is waning we discover at last Saydah, stretching out into the sea. In this day's march we have very seldom left the sea-shore, and our horses have had their feet constantly bathed by the ripple. The splashing makes them step short and sideways in the most ridiculous manner imaginable. Whenever we turn inland we are sure to find, for instance at the Raz-en-Nabi-Younìs,

* See Robinson, vol. iii., p. 432.

unmistakable, but very disagreeable signs of the Roman road which led along the Phœnician coast.

Night has quite closed in, but the moon shines brightly, and the temperature seems delightful after the heat of the day. At last, following the sea-shore, we arrive at the gate of the small borough which occupies the place of the ancient Sidon. Before us rise stupendous walls, through which there seems to be no passage. But lo! we turn to the right, and then to the left, I do not know how often, threading in Indian file through lanes covered over by thick vaults, which seem to open now and then merely to give entrance to the silvery moonlight; and, after a minute's ride, we enter into a large square court surrounded by high galleries. In the centre of the court, where our luggage is already piled up, is a reservoir shaded by the luxuriant foliage of the banana and other oriental trees. This khan is a French establishment. The French Consulate, a church, an inn kept by a good Christian woman called Angiolina: you find everything in this khan, the aspect of which is very pleasing. This is the first time we fall in with such good quarters, and we are therefore quite delighted.

Our hostess receives us very kindly; but our cook, though he has had plenty of time to prepare his abominable compounds in a real kitchen, does not give us much better fare than the day before; and after our supper we would most willingly turn in to rest, were it not that close to our bed-room some workmen are taking advantage of the cool night to pound by moonlight the earth with which they are building a terrace. These good folks, four in number, to charm their labours, sing together at the very top of their voices, seven notes, which they repeat in

constant succession, timing them with the blows with which they beat the earth. Two of them hold on with the seventh note, whilst the two others begin again the whole set, and so on without cessation. At first we find this music something uncommon and amusing, but after a time we get tired of it, and we should perhaps in the end have felt annoyed with our musical neighbours, if fatigue had not very soon drowned in sleep the consciousness of all other weariness. Everything considered, we are quite content with our day's work, and to-morrow, please the Lord, we shall take our night's abode at Sour, for time presses, and we have already lost a day's march ; but we have thoroughly examined the necropolis at El-Khaldah, and besides, we hope to make up for the hours we have spent in this interesting investigation.

December 15th.

Before daylight we are on foot and promenading through Saydah. The walk is not a long one. Fifty paces through a wretched bazaar take us to the sea-beach, where we have before us the remains of the pier which anciently closed in the harbour. We are offered everywhere medals, stones with carved characters, and remnants of antiquity of all kinds. I purchase two funeral slabs, with Greek inscriptions of no very ancient date, and I assist the Abbé in taking off the stamp of another inscription of the same kind, engraved on a bas-relief, which has been stuck into the very wall of the khan. It is the epitaph of an artist called Julian who has composed it for himself.

At exactly eight o'clock, everything being ready, we settle our accounts with Dame Angiolina and mount our horses. We leave Saydah through the same gate by which

we entered last night, and ride at first along the city walls. These are everywhere ornamented with banana and palm trees. The sun shines out in dazzling brilliancy, and the country we traverse is most agreeable. A large road shaded by tamarind trees and kharoubiers leads us again to the sea-shore. We are gay and hearty: everything goes right, we only regret the pleasant shade we have just left.

At about two thousand yards from Saydah we fall in with a splendid shaft of a granite column lying close by the road-side. It is a milestone which had been erected by the orders of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, in the sixth year of the reign of the first of these two emperors. The inscription is still pretty well preserved, and we remain some minutes copying it. This inscription, already noted and published by Monconys in 1695, has been published again with corrections by an English traveller, Maundrell. Since this gentleman's visit in 1705, the inscription has suffered a little, but it is nevertheless evidently the same stone he examined, and served to mark the termination of the second Roman mile from Sidon to Tyre. A little further on we found another stone, erected at the same time, and by the care of the same pro-prætor, Q. Venidius Rufus, whose name, according to Reland's statement,* was written quite legibly upon a similar column, seen between the first one we have mentioned and Sidon, by an English nobleman, in 1699.

Game is plentiful throughout this country, and all our caravan to their heart's content make an amazing consumption of powder. Lapwings, ducks, herons, are by turns in imminent danger, but generally the poor

* Palæstina, p. 403.

creatures escape with the fright only. Not one of them thinks of flying off at our approach; the larks walk quietly under our horses' feet. Evidently the natives of this country are still less to be dreaded by the feathered tribe than we are; the reason is this; they have all too great an affection for powder and shot, which they keep for better opportunities and for quite a different species of game.

At a little distance from Saydah we crossed the rivulet which the Arabs call the Nahr-es-Saynik; then leaving to our left the Ain-el-Rhaziat, we fall in further on with another little stream which forms a kind of morass called Birket-et-tell. After this, on the sea-shore and on a small promontory we see the Bordj-el-Akbea, a square tower in very bad condition.

We come at last to a very fine spring, the Ain-el-Khantarah, with a khan of the same name close to the beach. The sea-shore is here shaded by splendid tamarisks, peopled by myriads of goldfinches who keep up a most delightful warbling. It would be impossible to find a more delightful halting-place; so we stop here to breakfast until the heat of the day is over. We do not start again until two o'clock. Soon after, we leave on the height to our left the modern village of Sarfent; to our right the promontory of Raz-Sarfent overhangs the sea, and we arrive at the ruins of Sarepta, the Zarephath of the holy Scriptures, called by the Arabs Kherbet-e-Sarfent. Here resided the poor widow who sheltered the prophet Elijah.* At present nothing remains of Sarepta but some shapeless rubbish covering a good deal of ground.

A little further on we pass through other ruins of no

* 1 Kings, xvii. 9, 10.

great extent, called by the Arabs Kaysarieh. What Cæsarea this can be, which is mentioned no where, I cannot guess. We constantly fall in again with very clearly marked remains of the Roman way, which led along the coast of Phœnicia, and we are anything but delighted whenever we come to them, for nothing can be more wearisome than travelling over the stones which formerly paved this road.

We soon descry to our left, and only a few hundred yards from our path, the Necropolis of Adloun. Of course we cannot pass it by without stopping for a moment. Besides, I have been told there is in this necropolis an Egyptian stelograph, indicating the passage of Sesostris; the attraction is quite sufficient. We alight from our horses and begin climbing the rocks, which are everywhere excavated into ancient tombs. After having carefully examined some of them I set out in quest of my stelograph. I do not leave a rock without inspecting it from top to bottom, and, after a search of an hour and a half, I discover that I am quite alone, that I have completely gone round the hill, and that if I have not lost my time—for I have thoroughly studied the largest necropolis in Phœnicia —I have, at any rate, lost all hope of finding here any thing shaped like an Egyptian bas-relief. Vainly I put the question to some Motualis whom I meet accidentally —with no great satisfaction I confess; not one of them has ever heard of any inscription cut out in the mountain. As I am holding a pistol in each hand my interlocutors are very polite of course. I think at last of rejoining my companions, whom I find rather anxious for my safety, and shouting out with all their might to recal me. It is nearly five o'clock, daylight is on the wane, and it is

getting cold, so we take to our horses again in all haste.

The ground we tread on is damp and marshy; we must proceed carefully not to break our horses' legs. The country here is full of antelopes. Sayd, our moukri, rides at the head of the column, singing away to break the dulness of our march, when all of a sudden some other musicians join in the chorus. First, it is a troop of jackalls who accompany us for some distance with their plaintive howling; but the next moment they give place to a more powerful performer. A hyena, still fasting I suppose, follows for some time on our track from bush to bush, sending forth doleful lamentations, and seeming to implore us for a dinner of any kind. Sayd immediately relinquishes the honour of marching in front, and contrives to creep into the very centre of the party. Every one cocks his piece, and we move cautiously on, looking sharply to the side of the road where lurks our uninvited travelling companion. However, I do not understand why the Arabs hold the hyena in such dread, for nothing can be more cowardly than that hideous animal. In about half an hour the brute gave us up, and all our guns were slung again.

On leaving Adloun we crossed the Nahr-aboul-Asoued, close to the ruins of an ancient bridge; already, before reaching the necropolis, we had met with a small stream over which were observed the abutments of some very old construction of the same kind. Lastly, towards half-past six o'clock, when night had nearly closed in, we cross the Nahr-el-Kasmieh over a fine modern bridge (Djesr-el-Kasmieh), built by Ibrahim Pacha, and arrive almost immediately at the Khan-el-Kasmieh, a sort of ruined fortress, where we are obliged, whether we like it or not, to

take shelter for the night; the khandji does not look more inviting than his establishment, and we determine to keep guard all night, each of us mounting sentry by turns.

A host of pilgrims of both sexes had reached the khan before us. André, who came on a-head, has thought proper to turn out of the only sheltered vault, the people who had already taken up their quarters there. As he speaks to them in Turkish, and makes a great deal of noise, he succeeds in rendering these good people afraid of him, and they are silly enough to give up their room to him, or rather to us. So we turn in in their stead, but reckon upon passing a wretched night on account of the vermin.

In this respect we were not disappointed; we had even the surprise of an additional pleasure. There were next to us some cocks and hens belonging to the khandji, and we had entered on possession of our bed-room without imagining that we were not the only occupiers of the place. But scarcely were we, with the exception of the sentry on duty, stretched on our camp cots, when one cock, then two cocks, then a host of cocks began crowing so as to drive us mad. We caught hold of the troublesome birds and expelled them, notwithstanding the angry vociferations of the khandji, whom we turned out along with his pets. But alas! the wall was quite full of holes which we had not thought of stopping; just as we were enjoying the idea that we were rid of our crowing neighbours, they began once more as shrill as ever, all the exiles having got in again with the exception of the khandji. To turn them out a second time, and to stop such apertures in the wall as we could discover, was the work of a moment; but five minutes after it was all the same, the fowls had invaded us a third time. So we gave

up further resistance, taking the wisest course, that of laughing at our annoyance, and doing our best to sleep as well as we could.

December 16th.

Daylight breaks again; no one this time proves lazy or requires to be called. Now then let us be off. Stop! we are reckoning without our host. Last night we frightened the khandji's poultry; nay, we turned him out himself. During our sleep he has taken his revenge. Arab horses never stray from the encamping ground, this is a well established fact. Still, this morning three of our horses are missing; they have been stolen of course. But this does not suit us, any more than it suits our moukris. We inquire angrily after our horses, and are quite prepared to deal vengeance on the khandji, and an old ragged mendicant who seems to be his accomplice. Threatening these two scoundrels with our pistols, we announce to them that if our horses are not brought back immediately, we shall take both worthies with us as prisoners to Sour, where we promise to procure for them the pleasures of a regular bastinado. At first they listened to us with prodigious indifference; it would seem as if they were totally unconcerned in what we were saying. But the khandji very soon finds out that we are in no jesting humour, that we are clearly the stronger party; and as, in this country, the stronger party has always the best of the argument, and as it is not quite safe playing tricks with people who speak very roundly of shooting both him and his honest friend through the head, rather than of submitting to be robbed by them, he makes up his mind to go in quest of our animals. He starts with two of our moukris whilst we keep our eye upon his confederate.

Within an hour our three horses are brought back by him ready harnessed. The reader may guess that for this once we did not pay much for our night's lodging.

We are off at last by nine o'clock. The khan we have just left looks like an old ruined fortress. Some remains of ancient structures, some fragments of pillars, are rudely built up into the walls; and, as the Arabs seldom employ any other materials but those they have at hand, it is very probable that the Khan-el-Kasmieh has taken the place of a Phœnician town, which we shall endeavour to make out by and by.

Leaving the banks of the Nahr-el-Kasmieh, the Léontès of the ancients, we cross over some marshy ground, at the extremity of which we come up to a kind of large horse-pond, called Ain-el-Barouk. The water in it is lukewarm, and abounds with pretty river shells, of which we make an ample collection whilst our horses are drinking. Our sportsmen again fired away at a great rate during the entire march. In half an hour more, having passed on our left the ruins of an aqueduct, we enter the town of Sour.

We take up our lodgings at the Austrian consul's residence, close upon a dock, of no great depth, formed towards the open sea by the remains of an ancient mole. We arrived early enough to obtain a look at the town before dinner. Our first visit is to the ruins of the cathedral: they are imposing; but what excites our admiration even more, is the sight of some magnificent double columns of pink granite, and prodigious size, half buried under the walls of some modern houses. On one of these walls I find a fragment of an inscription of the thirteenth century, but with only one word left, the name

Marescalcus. After this, we examine the ruins of a large structure, which they call here the Seraglio; but it is now deserted, having become unsafe from repeated shocks of earthquakes. We find here a considerable number of shells and insects; and before daylight is quite spent, we proceed to an esplanade of ramparts, commanding the sea from a great height. At the foot of these ramparts the waves break against a massive wall of masonry, in which are buried without any order or distinction, a great number of broken pillars, time-worn by the lapse of centuries. Some excavated rocks, like those we have seen in Beyrout, appear here and there along the coast. Such are the remains of Tyre, the splendid metropolis of Phœnicia!

We have scarcely light enough left to find our way back when we make up our minds to return home: there we are visited by a host of dealers in antiquities; but they have nothing very interesting, and with the exception of some medals and a pretty little head of an empress in white marble, we find scarcely anything to satisfy our taste for relics of by-gone ages. Compared to our last night's resting-place, our lodging is a palace; and this time, at all events, we shall enjoy a really good night.

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Sour.—Roman road.—Illness of the author's son.—The white Cape.—Eskanderoon.—Ruins.—Cyclopean Walls.—Dogs and Mosquitoes.—Akka, or St. Jean d'Acre.—Franciscan convent.—Effects of bombardment in 1840.—Gulf of Acre.—Itinerary from Beyrout to Acre.—Nazareth.—Church and chamber of the Annunciation.—Djenin.—A miserable khan.—A thieving cook.

December 17*th.*

THIS morning at eight o'clock, we have resumed our march, leaving Sour by the same gate through which we entered it; and that for an excellent reason, the town has no other. About a hundred yards from this entrance is a kind of square tower, or rather reservoir, called the Ain-Habrian. A fine ancient sarcophagus is used here as a trough.

At first we proceed eastward, then we turn to the south, in the direction of Deir-Khanoun, which we descry on a distant height. To the right, and towards the sea-shore, at about five hundred yards from the city gate, stands surrounded by gardens the Bordj-el-Mogharby (Western Tower). The road stretches across a level of very light sand, above which we perceive two shafts of columns, standing at about a thousand yards from the present town of Sour. A thousand yards further on, and in the same direction, is a Mussulman oualy (chapel), called Naby-Yahia, and also two considerable farms (Mezrao), dependencies of Raz-el-Ain. In the hamlet so called (Raz-el-Ain)

are some very remarkable wells, called Solomon's Wells, and some mills which are set in motion by a small river called the Nahr Raz-el-Ain ; and lastly, beyond a mill, which is built on the right bank of the river, is a burying-ground. The hamlet itself is about five thousand yards distant from Sour. We shall see, by and by, what we are probably to make of Raz-el-Ain at the time when Tyre was flourishing.

We cross the Nahr Raz-el-Ain close to the ruins of a bridge, named by the Arabs Djesr-el-Maksour ; and after having proceeded for several hours southward, and along the sea-shore, we direct our course straight on to St. Jean d'Acre, where we trust to arrive in the evening.

Along the coast we fall in again pretty often, as we have done for days before, with traces of the old Roman road. The weather is still the same, and the temperature may be compared in every respect to that of the fine summer days of our own country. But our happiness is unfortunately marred by an accident which we were far from anticipating. Towards ten o'clock in the morning, my son is taken ill again with fever, and is seized by a very violent fit. I begin to discover that he is not yet strong enough to endure the fatigues inseparable from such a journey ; and the thought of the awful responsibility which would hang over me, if, unfortunately, the health of my only child were to be permanently injured, leads me to the resolution of sending him back to France, where the affectionate care and superior medical attendance which he is sure to find will restore him before the disease has had time to grow upon his constitution. However, we are now only three or four days' march from Jerusalem. To return home without having accomplished such a

pilgrimage, I know, would be to him a subject of endless regret. I therefore impart my intention with hesitation and reluctance ; but at the same time I comfort him as well as I can, and explain how necessary it is to push on to Jerusalem, where some days' rest will restore his strength sufficiently to enable him to retrace his steps to Beyrout, and then proceed from that place to France by the next steamer.

By eleven o'clock we pass the ruins of an ancient town of considerable size, called now Kharbet-es-Chebraych. These ruins lie at the foot of the abrupt declivity leading to the summit of Raz-el-Abiadh, or the White Cape, so called on account of the chalk rock which forms the promontory. The road is cut out of the rock, and is very steep and difficult for our horses. Whilst we ascend it, the Abbé and my son have remained behind—the Abbé, to collect some new plants ; my son, because, labouring under fever, he cannot keep up with the pace of our horses. All of a sudden we hear the Abbé calling out for help ; and I hasten down to join them in great anxiety. My poor son had fallen heavily from his horse, his strength failing him, so that he could not keep the saddle. Indeed, he had been very nearly either killed on the spot, or rolled from the highest point of the cape into the sea.

Supporting and helping him in the best way we can, we carry him to the summit of the cape, where there is a wretched khan, called the Khan-el-Khamrah, and a deserted tower, called the Bordj-el-Biadeh, or White Tower. Close to it runs a stream with very little water, called the Ain-el-Khamrah. Here we make a halt, which has become absolutely necessary, to allow my son's fever to subside a little. Our cook Constantine sets to work, and the invalid,

covered with the cloaks and great coats of all the party, enjoys a quiet sleep inside the khan, whilst we breakfast in the open air.

Up to two o'clock we remain in this place examining the rocks, and collecting from among them some sea-urchins, and fossil shells, which we have great difficulty in detaching from the chalky stratum. Some fine plants, some insects, and some land shells, all quite new to us, have made us bear our misfortune with tolerable patience, so that we do not much regret the time we have spent at the Raz-el-Abiadh. At two o'clock, we mount again, or rather we pretend to mount our horses, for on the southern declivity of this cape the road is quite as bad as on the northern side, and we are obliged to take great precautions to avoid fresh accidents; at last we are again on a level with the shore, and on the Roman road. At some hundred yards only from the foot of the cape, we stop before a double fountain, overgrown with bright green moss, and placed at the opening of a small eminence covered with rubbish. These remains are named by the Arabs, Eskanderoon, which indicates undoubtedly the site of the town, mentioned in the "Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem," in the year of our Lord 333, under the title of Alexandroschines.

We had lost too much time at the Khan-el-Khamrah, to have any chance of reaching St. Jean d'Acre before the closing of the gates, so we make up our minds to stop at the Khan-en-Nakoura, which we shall find on the road two or three leagues further on. We allow our luggage to precede us, and my son being anxious to reach the resting-place as soon as possible, goes on with the luggage. The remainder of the party proceed as

usual, slowly, carefully examining everything that appears worthy of observation.

Half-a-league beyond Eskanderoon, and on the summit of some small hills covered with thorns and dwarf trees, we perceive a pillar standing erect. I immediately question our moukri, Saïd, who has a very good knowledge of this country. "This place," says he, "is called Oum-el-Aamid; but no traveller ever visits it; there's nothing to be seen." *Oum-el-Aamid, the Mother of Pillars!* such a name is quite enough to make me determine at once to run to the spot. I push my horse out of the beaten path; and through the high grass and the brushwood I reach the foot of the declivity, upon which stands out in bold relief the column we have seen from afar. Once there we are amply repaid for our curiosity, and for our firmness in not listening to the moukris, who are always ready to declare there is nothing to be seen wherever we propose to stop, because the place appears to us worth our examining. Instinctively—also, perhaps through a spirit of contradiction, and to avoid travelling like common tourists, who are led like so much luggage from one place to another—whenever our guides assert there is nothing to be seen, and that we had better go on, we immediately stop and examine; and it very seldom happens that we do not succeed in making some interesting discoveries.

We never, I believe, have had better cause to congratulate ourselves on this determination, than in the present circumstance of Oum-el-Aamid. On the very first eminence we ascended of the small range of wooded hills on which we have just entered, we fall in with sepulchral grottoes; the coffin of an enormous sarcophagus,

ornamented in front with an altar cut out of the same block of stone; then again with walls of Cyclopean structure. When on the summit, it is not one pillar, but three pillars that we find standing; one only has preserved its capital, the same we observed from the road. Numberless capitals and broken shafts cover the ground. The capitals are Ionic, and elegant palmettos curl round the shaft at the summit.

A fine mosaic paved the monument we are now examining, and we succeed in clearing from the surrounding rubbish a considerable portion of it. Black, red, and white cubes, regularly intermixed, form graceful figures on the fragment we have before us; but we have neither time nor means to ascertain whether this splendid pavement contains more elaborate designs. Beyond this monument, and as far as the eye can reach, the declivities are covered with briars, through which numberless walls of Cyclopean structure, but of inferior materials, spring up, forming quadrangular inclosures with doorways, supporting terraces, and what may have formerly acted as ramparts.

Two hours are employed in examining very imperfectly a small portion of this ancient city, but the approach of night compels us to tear ourselves away from a place where many most interesting observations might be made, which would occupy days; however, we hasten to get on horseback, as we have no guide with us, and are anxious to recover our road again before night has closed in.

In a few minutes we are on the proper track, and cross an inconsiderable stream over which there is an ancient bridge, in ruins, called the Djesr-el-Madfoun, (or the

Buried Bridge). We thought we had no great distance to go to reach our resting-place, but when we examine the Khan-en-Nakoura, where we find only the khandji, we think our servants have done right in pushing on, and in believing that we should never consent to pass a whole night on such a dunghill, where there is not room enough for ourselves even without our luggage. While we are completely at a loss in which direction to proceed, the chief of our moukris comes to meet us, not so much because he felt anxiety on our account, but that he wanted to persuade us to turn off to El-Bassah, a village quite inland, and to the left of the road leading to St. Jean d'Acre.

We leave the sea-shore at the cape called Raj-el-Ashraf, and moving eastward, through a well-cultivated plain, planted with fine olive trees, arrive after three hours' ride at the entrance to El-Bassah. Here we have to go from house to house, fighting our way through a legion of savage dogs, who bark at us most furiously, in quest of the resting-place which has been prepared for our reception ; until we arrive at last in front of an extensive barn occupied by a Greek priest, and used by him both as church and habitation. A ladder, composed of stones stuck into the wall at regular intervals takes us to a platform on a level with a large shed which opens into it. This is to be our drawing, dining, and sleeping room. We should have been more comfortable here than in our former dormitories, had it not been for the smoke and the mosquitoes. We had hoped that the one nuisance would have rid us of the other ; but alas, it was an illusion : we were devoured all night ; but, everything considered, the day has been a splendid one ; we have

made some capital discoveries, and to-morrow, if we meet with no accident, we shall be at St. Jean d'Acre.

December 18th.

Before seven o'clock we were on horseback, and directing our course diagonally across the country, so as to fall in again into the Acre road. We reach it a little above Ez-zib, the Ecdippa of Josephus, and the Achzib of the book of Joshua (xix, 29). In the book of Judges (i, 31), we read that although this town had been assigned to the tribe of Asher, the children of Asher did not succeed in taking possession of it, or in expelling the Canaanites.

On leaving El-Bassah, we observed, two thousand yards distant to our left, and on the summit of a hill, a tall monumental pillar standing alone, which the motukris call Amoud-el-Kamsy; I regret exceedingly not having had time to examine it, and I hope the attention of other travellers may be directed to this point.

Before getting into the beaten path beyond Ez-zib, we meet with numerous herds of antelopes. But the labourers are swarming in the fields; they are often concealed by the high grass, and the fear of sending a stray bullet through one of them is enough to make us give up all temptation to sporting. By ten o'clock we halt on the bank of a rivulet, under magnificent orange trees, covered with flowers and fruit. This place is called Djesr-el-Mejrâah, on account of a paved road and a bridge crossing the marshy ground formed by the Nahr-el-Mejrâah.

Whilst Master Constantine is preparing our breakfast and complaining that we eat too much, and that we have appetites which he never bargained for, judging

from what he had seen us do in that way in Greece; we beat the country, some to kill birds, others to botanise or look for insects. Our hunting is successful, in every department, and we return on hearing the signal warning us that breakfast is ready. Whilst we have been walking, honest Constantine has been at his tricks again. A poor devil of a negro, tenant of the ground upon which we have halted, has come to request a bakhshish (present). Master cook has asked this man to sell him some limes and oranges, and the rogue, after having paid him only twenty paras, about twelve cents, for forty dozen of the fruit, abuses the vendor for being dissatisfied with the price. On our return we gave some piastres to the negro, and already foresee that we shall not keep M. Constantine very long in our service. We are content to be robbed by him ourselves; but to allow him to pillage other people in our names, is more than we bargained for or intend to put up with quietly.

At about half-past twelve we resume our march. The road improves, and it is plain we are approaching a more important town than any we have passed through on the foregoing days. Some very pretty houses, with real gardens, appear to the left of the road. One of these is pointed out to us as having been formerly the residence of Abdalla Pacha. A little further on we pass through the hamlet of Bakadjeh. To our left, and running parallel to the road, a very fine aqueduct of modern structure, supplies the inhabitants of Akka with water. This was erected by the cruel Djezzar Pacha, surnamed the Butcher for his atrocities.

Akka lies before us. After having passed under one

of the arches of the aqueduct, the road inclines a little westward, and at half-past three we enter St. Jean d'Acre by a handsome gate of European architecture. The fortifications, though in bad repair, still show that they are the work of competent engineers.

We fix our quarters in the Franciscan convent, where we are received by the good fathers with the most cordial hospitality. One of them takes us over the convent, and shows from the terrace the still visible effects of the bombardment of 1840. More than ten years have elapsed since the town was riddled with shot and shell by the English fleet, and everything is at this moment in the same condition as when the bombardment ended.

The Gulf of Acre presents a magnificent prospect, with the town in the foreground, Mount Carmel separated from it by a beautiful sheet of clear blue water, and a sea of dazzling light stretching out to the horizon. To the left a fertile plain is bounded at the distance of two leagues by green hills, surmounted by handsome villages. Whilst we are gazing at this splendid panorama the sun goes down and the fresh night air sets in; we return to the convent, dine, and hasten to our beds; to-morrow we have a long day's march before us to reach Nazareth, and we must prepare for it by a good night's rest, which we are much in need of after the heat we have endured all day.

Let us now pause to inquire if we can make out the ancient names of the places where we have fallen in with ruins, on the way between Beyrout and Akka. Certainly the question is well worth examining; but I will endeavour to be brief, though without neglecting any evidence tending to throw light on the subject. The ancient geographical authorities which may be referred to in this discussion,

are the writings of Scylax, Pliny, Dionysius Periegetes, Priscian and Strabo, the Itinerary of Antoninus, Peutinger's Table, and lastly, the (Pilgrim's) Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem. Let us compare the geographical information derived from these authors, with the modern names which we have ourselves verified on the road; and when we have drawn up a *Comparative Table*, let us discuss each separate locality, place after place. By proceeding in this manner we shall succeed, I hope, in solving a curious problem, which has been often, though unsuccessfully studied; or at all events, in correcting some erroneous assertions with respect to mistaken identities, proposed and admitted without sufficient examination.

We now propose to follow the present Itinerary from Beyrout to Akka, proceeding along the coast from north to south, and to review successively each name as we find it.

BEYROUT.

The modern Beyrout is evidently the Βηρυτὸς πόλις of Scylax, the Colonia Felix Julia Berytus of Pliny, the Βηρυτὸς of Strabo, the Berito of Antonine's Itinerary, the Beritho of Peutinger's Table, and lastly the Civitas Birito of the Bordeaux Itinerary.

The colonial medals with the legend COL. BER. are still found in Beyrout, though they have become rather scarce; and the ruins which extend over the coast, from the south side of the present harbour down to Raz-Beyrout, and eastward to a great distance from the shore, show that the town must formerly have been one of great importance.

The beach is entirely covered with broken shafts of columns constantly beaten by the surge; the mole itself is made up of similar fragments, and three fine pillars are

COMPARATIVE TABLE FOR THE PLACES SITUATED ALONG THE PHŒNICIAN COAST.

Periplus de Scylax. Ed. Miller.	Pliny.	Dionysius the Periegete. Priscian.	Strabo. Book xvi., ed. Letronne.	Itinerary of Antoninus. Ed. Miller.	Table of Peutinger. Ed. Miller.	Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem. Ed. Miller.	Modern Names.
Βηρυτὸς πόλις καὶ λιμὴν.	Beritus	.....	Berytus	Berito.....	Beritho	Civitas Birito	Beyrout.
Βοστρὸς? [Βοστρὸς?	Col. Fel. Jul.					Mutatio Heldua. M. XII.	Khan-el-Khaldah.
.....	.....	.....	Tamyras	.....	.....	.....	Nahr-ed-Damour.
Ποσειδίου πόλις.....	.....	.....	(Forest of Æsculapius. *Leontopolis*)	.....	.....	Mut. Porphyrion. M. IIII.	Naby-Younba.
		Bostrenus	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nahr-el-Aoualy.
Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν....	Sidon	.....	Sidon, at 400 stadia from Berytus.	Sidona. M. XXX.	Sydone M. XXIX.	Civitas Sidona. VIII. ..	Saydah.
Inter-polation. Ὀρνίθων πόλις Σιδονίων. Λεόντων πόλις.							
Τυρίων πόλις Σάρεπτα ...	Sarepta et *Ornithon oppida.*	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sarfent.
							Kaisarieh.
						Mut. ad. Nonum. M. IIII.	Adloun.
			Ornithopolis (river), i.e. *Leontès*	.....	.....	.....	Nahr-el-Kasmieh.
							Khan-el-Kasmieh.
Πόλις Τύρος . . . λιμένα ἔχουσα ἐντὸς τείχους	Tyrus	.....	Tyrus, 200 stadia from Sidon	Tyro. M. XXIIII.	Tyro. M. XXIIII.	Civitas Tyro. M. XII. ..	Sour.
Παλαίτυρος πόλις καὶ	Palæstyrus.....	.....	Palæstyrus, at 30 stadia from Tyrus	.....	.....	.....	Râs-el-Ayn.
Ποταμὸς διὰ μέσης ῥεῖ ...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nahr Râs-el-Ayn.
							Es-Chebrayeh (ruins).
	Promontor. album.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Râs-el-Abiadh.
						Mut. Alexandroschene. M. XII.	Eskanderoon.
							Omm-el-Aamid.
Πόλις τῶν Ἐκδίττων ...	Oppidum Ecdippa.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Mutatio Ecdippa. M. XII.	Es-zib.
Ποταμὸς.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nahr-el-Mesraah.
Ἀκη πόλις	Ptolemais ..... Col. Claud. Cæs. *quondam Aké.*[a]	.....	Aké.....	Ptolemais .... XXXII. (al. XXX.)	Ptolemais .... XXXII.	Civitas Ptolemais .... M. VIII.	Akka.

[a] Pliny mentions a town called Leontos between Beryte and the river Lycus!

still standing in a private garden, close to the Seraglio gate; mosaics, imperfectly concealed by the rubbish, are found in several places; but all these ruins are to be met with *only* to the east and south of the harbour, which occupies the northern extremity of the modern, as it did likewise of the ancient town. This remark will enable us to decide at once a very curious geographical question.

The text of Scylax, re-produced by Reland, mentions with regard to Beyrout, Βηρυτὸς πόλις καὶ λιμὴν Βορινὸς; the same text published by Gail, mentions Βηρυτὸς πόλις καὶ λιμὴν, Βορινὸς; but here the two last words are separated by a comma; and thirdly, in the collection of ancient itineraries, put together by the Marquis de Fortia, and published by Miller, this comma of Gail has been retained, and the table of the Periplus of Scylax has been made out thus:

Βηρυτὸς πόλις καὶ λιμὴν,
Βορινὸς,

as if there were two distinct places to be noted. Saumaise, with his usual sagacity, had proposed to correct Βορινὸς into Βορεινὸς, and Reland had accepted that emendation. For my part, having thoroughly studied the ground, I cannot entertain the slightest doubt of the necessity of the correction. The harbour of Beyrout was on the northern side of the town; there is no indication whatever, anywhere, of any town with a name offering the slightest analogy with the word Βόρινος: it is therefore decidedly Βόρειος that we must read, translating the above-mentioned passage of the Periplus as follows: "the town of Beyrout with its harbour to the northward."

KHAN-EL-KHALDAH.

At about the third part of the distance, by the beaten road, from Beyrout to Saydah, are found some ruins, and an immense necropolis cut out of the flank of the first spur of Mount Libanus. On the very site of these ruins is a khan (or caravansera) called Khan-el-Khaldah. There, without any possible doubt, has existed an ancient town of some importance; for the sarcophagi in this necropolis are to be numbered by hundreds. But let us hasten to add that the very form of these sarcophagi of Græco-Roman structure, shows that they are posterior to the excavations of the Phœnician necropolises; for instance, to the necropolis of Adloun, of which proper notice will be taken by and by. At El-Khaldah I have not observed a single funeral chamber of Phœnician origin; and accordingly we do not find in the comparatively ancient geographers any mention of a town which could be identified with El-Kaldah. We must go back to the year of our Lord 333, when the Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem was written, to find at a distance of twelve Roman miles from Civitas Birito, a station for relay horses called *Mutatio Heldua.* Between *Heldua* and the modern form of El-Khaldah, the difference in sound is not so great, but that both might easily be made to apply to the same place, as Pococke has first suggested. But here a difficulty occurs: the Itinerary mentions a distance of twelve miles from Birito to Heldua, and only four miles from Heldua to another relay station, Mutatio Porphyrion; that is, to Naby Younès, as we shall shortly prove. The learned Dr. Robinson has imagined that the two numbers referring to Heldua and Porphyrion must have been inverted by the

error of a copyist, and we may safely conclude that he has taken a correct view of the case. Besides, we shall see presently, how often the distances mentioned in the Itinerary are incorrectly given.

NAHR-ED-DAMOUR.

Between the Khan-el-Khaldah and the Khan-en-Naby-Younès, the road crosses the Nahr-ed-Damour. Strabo places precisely at the very same spot the river Tamyras. We therefore read in his book : Μετὰ δὲ Βηρυτόν ἐστι Σιδὼν ὅσον ἐν τετρακοσίοις σταδίοις μεταξὺ δὲ ὁ Ταμύρας ποταμὸς καὶ τὸ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ Ἄλσος καὶ Λεόντων πόλις. As the river Damour is precisely half-way between Berytus and Sidon ; as also the modern name Damour retains enough of the primitive form, which Strabo has expressed by the word Tamyras, there can be no doubt as to the identity of these two names ; and Strabo's information with regard to the geographical position of the Tamyras was perfectly correct. We shall now see that he is not equally so when he speaks of Λεόντων πόλις.

KHAN-EN-NABY-YOUNES.

At Naby Younès are found some fragments and some fine shafts of columns lying in the hamlet behind the khan. These relics are sufficient to justify the opinion that an ancient town existed in this place. But what was that town? Let us consult the ancient geographers. Scylax places after Berytus Πορφυρέων πόλις. The Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem mentions, as eight miles distant before coming to Sidon, a relay station called Mutatio Porphyrion. No other geographer speaks of Porphyrion ; but Strabo places in this very spot Λεόντων

πόλις, whilst Pliny speaks of Leontos Oppidum as being to the north of Berytus, and between this town and the river Lycus (the Nahr-el-Kelb of the present day); and Scylax places Λεόντων πόλις beyond Sidon. The two concordant testimonies of Scylax and of the Pilgrim from Bordeaux are quite sufficient, and nearly all travellers, down to the present day, have admitted, as I do, that Khan-en-Naby-Younès occupies the exact site of Porphyrion. A forest of tamarisk trees, several hundred years old, surrounds the modern khan, and one might almost take these trees for the descendants of those which formed in days of yore the sacred forest of Æsculapius. It, therefore, seems rational enough to admit that Strabo has been led into an error, and that, confounding Porphyrion with Leonton, he has placed the one instead of the other between the Tamyras and Sidon.

NAHR-EL-AOUALY.

Within sight of Saydah, we cross a pretty river, now called the Nahr-el-Aoualy. This river can be no other than the Bostrenus, which we find mentioned in the following passages:

. . . . . Καὶ Σιδόνα ἀνθεμόεσσαν
Ναιομένην χαρίεντος ἐφ' ὕδασσι Βοστρηνοῖο.

The poem of Dionysius the Periegete* has been translated into Latin verse by Rufus Fastus Avienus. The passage corresponding to the one I have just given is as follows:

Sidoniique lares; ubi labens agmine amœno
Cespitis irrigui Bostrenus jugera findit.

* Towards the year 913 or 914 B.C.

And lastly Priscian translated it as follows :

. . . Sidonaque pulchram
Quam juxtà liquido Bostrenus gurgite currit.

So, in this case again, it is beyond a doubt that the Bostrenus of Dionysius the Periegete, of Festus Avienus and of Priscian, is no other than the Nahr-el-Aoualy of our days ; which has probably received its present name from some Mussulman chapel near which it flows.

SAYDAH.

This is undoubtedly the Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν κλειτὸς of Scylax, the Sidon of Pliny, the Σιδὼν of Strabo, who places it at four hundred stadia from Berytus, the Sidona of Antonine's Itinerary, the Sydone of Peutinger's Table, and, lastly, the Civitas Sidona of the Pilgrim from Bordeaux. It would be quite useless to argue this identity, which proves itself. However, I think it may be useful to compare the distances from Berytus to Sidon, according to the different statements of the ancient itineraries which we possess. Strabo says that Sidon is distant from Berytus four hundred stadia ; Antonine's Itinerary makes it XXX. miles ; Peutinger's Table only XXIX. ; and, lastly, the Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem mentions XII. miles from Berytus to Heldua ; IIII. miles from Heldua to Porphyrion, and VIII. miles from Porphyrion to Saydah. The total of these three last being only four-and-twenty miles, it is evident that one at least of the distances is incorrect. It is plain, besides, that there is no coincidence between the three above-mentioned itineraries. That of Antonine and Peutinger's Table, differing only by a single unit, might easily be made to correspond either by taking

away the figure I. intercalated between the two last X. of the number in Peutinger's Table, or by intercalating this same unit in the same place of the number in Antonine's Itinerary. As to the three numbers in the Bordeaux Itinerary, I dare not take upon myself to change them so as to make the total correspond with the others; and I intend only to observe that the first appears to be rather too high, the second a great deal too low, and the third nearly correct. Thus, in allowing ten miles only from Berytus to Heldua, twelve from Heldua to Porphyrion, and, lastly, eight from Porphyrion to Sidona, we accord exactly with the thirty miles of Antonine's Itinerary. But I hasten to repeat that I lay little stress on these corrections in numbers which any one can alter according to his own idea; I merely want to prove that those numbers, which I have just examined, are wrong, and cannot be accepted.

There still remains another point to adjust before leaving Saydah. The text of Scylax, reproduced by Reland, mentions Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν κλειτὸς; this last word is omitted in Miller's edition. Reland has translated this passage in the following manner: "Sidon urbs cum portu clauso." But then he has substituted, instead of the word κλειτὸς, the word κλειστὸς, which means "closed." As the harbour of Sidon was really closed in by a mole, the remains of which are still plainly visible, Reland's correction seems to me to be perfectly well founded, and I have no hesitation in adopting it.

Let us now resume the second part of our itinerary along the Phœnician coast, I mean that portion which lies between Sidon and Tyre.

SARFENT.

The first ruined town which you meet after leaving Saydah is Sarfent, the Zarephath of the Holy Scriptures, which Pliny mentions thus: "Sarepta et Ornithon oppida," between Sidon and Tyre. It is also mentioned in the Periplus of Scylax, the text of which I must quote to support my argument.

Here it is according to Reland :—

Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν κλειτὸς, Ὀρνίθων πόλις Σιδωνίων, ἀπὸ Λεόντων πόλεων μέχρι Ὀρνίθων πόλεως Τυρίων πόλις Σάρα. . . . Εἶτα ἄλλη πόλις Τύρος λιμένα ἔχουσα ἐντὸς τείχους.

The text of the same passage, published by Gail, is as follows :—

Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν, Ὀρνίθων πόλις Σιδωνίων. Ἀπὸ Λεόντων πόλεως, μέχρι Ὀρνίθων πόλεως. . . . Τυρίων πόλις Σάραπτα, ἄλλη πόλις Τύρος λιμένα ἔχουσα ἐντὸς τείχους.

From this it appears that Gail adopts the corrections proposed by Saumaise, Vossius, and Reland, who restore πόλεως for πόλεων, and Σάραπτα for Σάρα εἶτα. These corrections are indeed indispensable. But are they sufficient to make the text intelligible when studied and compared with the actual localities? Certainly not. First, this text, if it were to remain such as it is, would place Sarepta, or Sarfent, between Ornithon and Leonton, which seems to me quite impossible, considering that, between Saydah and Sarfent there are no ruins of any town whatsoever. Are we then to understand by Λεόντων πόλις the City of the Lions? I doubt this very much, the more so as Pliny calls it Leontos Oppidum, or Leontopolis. Leonton was probably the name of the entire district, as Porphyrion and

Ornithon were the names of two other Phœnician localities. Is it not much more natural to suppose that the name Leonton was derived from the river Leontes, in the vicinity of which it would then be advisable to look for Leonton? I have no hesitation in believing this.

The Leontes was the Nahr-el-Kasmieh of the present day; for this same river is also called Nahr Lantaneh, or Nahr Lanteh; and in this modern appellation we find the very recognisable transmission of the original name. On the south bank of the Nahr-el-Kasmieh is situated the Khan-el-Kasmieh, a large caravansera, the walls of which contain numerous fragments of ancient buildings, a very conclusive sign that some ancient city has existed before on this same spot. I therefore venture to place there the Λεόντων πόλις of Scylax, the Leontopolis which Strabo fixes very unadvisedly on the south bank of the Tamyras, or Damour, and the Leontos Oppidum which Pliny, still more erroneously, throws back to the north of Berytus, between that town and the Lycus.

According to Gail, there is something wanting between the words Ὀρνίθων πόλεως and the other words, Τυρίων πόλις Σάραπτα; and this learned Hellenist declares that he is inclined to consider as a foreign interpolation into the original text of Scylax all this portion of the phrase: Ἀπὸ Λεόντων πόλεως, μέχρι Ὀρνίθου πόλεως . . . Τυρίων πόλις Σάραπτα. And, lastly, Reland, who has good reason to be surprised at the strange construction of this phrase, appends to it the following commentary (p. 431, note 4):—"Illud ἀπὸ et μέχρι videtur secum postulare πλοῦς vel simile quid, uti σταδία, et nec anteà meminit Leontopolis." It appears that all those who have examined the text of this passage of Scylax have not been

more fortunate than myself in making out its real signification. What I consider very probable is, that Gail was right in finding an interpolation in this unfinished phrase. Indeed, were we to accept the punctuation of Gail's edition, there would be three localities mentioned successively in a direction from *south to north*, besides still leaving something wanting between the designations of Ornithon and Sarepta; whilst the unvarying progress of the author of the Periplus is in a direction from *north to south*. Perhaps it might be possible to change the punctuation of the whole phrase in the following manner, which would be allowable without supposing any omission, as is conjectured by Gail, but not by Reland. But then it would be necessary to change ἀπὸ into ἀφ' ἧς, and the word πόλεως, which comes after it, into πόλις :—

Σιδὼν πόλις καὶ λιμὴν κλειστὸς, Ὀρνίθων πόλις Σιδωνίων, ἀφ' ἧς Λεόντων πόλις· μέχρι Ὀρνίθων πόλεως, Τυρίων πόλις Σάραπτα.

This means, "The town of Sidon with a closed harbour; Ornithon, a town of the Sidonians, after which the town of Leonton; before Ornithon, Sarapta, a town of the Tyrians."

Of course, I give this correction in Greek of rather inferior quality, for what it may be worth; I mean that I scarcely insist upon it, though it has been suggested to me by an inspection of the localities. Be that as it may, at all events, the ruins at present called Sarfent are unquestionably those of the Zarephath of the Scriptures, of the Sarapta of Scylax, and of the Sarepta of Pliny. It may be observed, however, that Pliny, who in his enumeration of the towns of the Phœnician coast, proceeds from south to north, mentions Ornithon after Sarepta, which seems to agree with the intricate passage

of the Periplus. But were we inclined to accept the meaning which seems to result from the combination of the texts of Pliny and Scylax, there would still remain two great objections. Where are we to find between Saydah and Sarfent the situation of an ancient town to be identified with Ornithon? And as a greater difficulty and objection still, where are we to find to the north of Sarepta, not the town of Ornithon as mentioned by Pliny, but the town of Leonton? The coincidence of the two authors is then entirely factitious; and as there does not exist in reality any ancient town between Saydah and Sarfent it is absolutely necessary to seek elsewhere for the two cities of Ornithon and Leonton, which I think must be placed in other localities. But I shall return to them shortly.

KAISARIEH.

At a very little distance to the south of Sarfent is a considerable rising ground, covered over with ruins, and named by the Arabs Kaisarieh. This circumstance makes it quite certain that there has existed in this place in days of yore a town called Cæsarea; but no mention of it that I am acquainted with, is anywhere to be found in the ancient authors.

ADLOUN.

We have now reached a very important locality, furnished with an immense necropolis which covers the side of an extensive hill; a necropolis quite different from that of El-Khaldah. Here we have no sarcophagi of recent structure, formed out of fragments of loose rocks, but sepulchral chambers excavated in the

solid rock itself, similar to those of the ancient necropolis of Jerusalem. It then becomes important to find out what may have been the Phœnician town to which Adloun has succeeded.

The Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem mentions but one relay station between Sidon and Tyre. This is the Mutatio ad Nonum. A name like this was so significant that one would think no copyist could have made a mistake as to the number of miles separating this place from Saydah. It was situated at the ninth milestone, ad Nonum milliarium; and the number of miles mentioned by the Bordeaux Pilgrim is only IIII. A mistake of this kind requires no correction. As to the figures inscribed on the milestones from Sidon to Tyre, there can be no doubt they began with No. 1 in starting from Saydah; for I have found still lying on the road-side two fine granite milestones, the first of which, a little more than two thousand yards from Saydah, bears the cypher II. It is therefore clear that the name "Ad Nonum" meant a place situated at the ninth milestone, starting from Saydah, on the way to Tyre. Ad Nonum was positively in the year 333 the name of that locality, and this name the Arabs have converted into Adloun. With the natives of Syria, *lam* and *noun* are easily confounded; nearly all pronounce, for instance, Ismayn for Ismayl, and by an inverse alteration, Ad Nonum, without much difficulty, changes into Adloun.

But it is not a mere relay station, a Mutatio of the fourth century, which can have produced the magnificent necropolis of Adloun. There must, I insist upon it, have existed in this place a flourishing Phœnician city. That

city, in my opinion, was Ornithon ; and here follows what Strabo tells us of its situation.

Διέχει δὲ τῆς Σιδόνος ἡ Τύρος οὐ πλείους τῶν διακοσίου σταδίων. Ἐν δὲ τῷ μεταξὺ πολίχνιον, Ὀρνίθων πόλις λεγομένη, εἶτα πρὸς Τύρῳ ποταμὸς ἐξίησι. "Tyre is not more than two hundred stadia distant from Sidon. Between these two cities is the town called Ornithon. After that, near Tyre, a river empties itself into the sea."

From the above quotation it appears that Ornithon was situated about half-way on the road from Sidon to Tyre, and before the river which, near Tyre, empties itself into the sea. This river is, and can be no other than the Leontis, or Nahr-el-Kasmieh. Ornithon was a more considerable town than Sarepta, since Strabo mentions the first without alluding to the second. All these indications apply admirably to Adloun. Upon the ruins of the Phœnician town Ornithon has probably been established the relay station Ad Nonum, so called when the Phœnician name was forgotten ; and thus it happens that we find the relics of Ornithon in the magnificent necropolis, and the traces of Ad Nonum in the modern name of Adloun.

I said just now that the text of the Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem was to be corrected with respect to the cypher IIII, indicating the number of miles between Saydah and the place called Ad Nonum ; as this place was necessarily situated at the ninth mile from Sidon on the way to Tyre, it is possible to guess from this that a still graver error has crept into the text ; for instance we read after the word Civitas Sidona, this phrase ; "Ib Helias ad viduam ascendit et petiit sibi cibum." Now it is in Sarepta, and not in Sidon, that

the holy Scriptures mention this historical fact as having taken place. It becomes therefore very probable that the word Sarepta has been omitted with the cypher v, which had been correctly attached to it; the existence of this cypher would then make equally correct the cypher IIII, which follows the name of Ad Nonum in the printed texts of the Itinerary. And to conclude, it would seem that between the words "Civitas Sidona," and the following passage concerning the prophet Elijah, a restoration ought to be inserted, written thus: "Sarepta—V."

NAHR-EL-KASMIEH AND KHAN-EL-KASMIEH.

I have already observed that the Nahr-el-Kasmieh, also called the Nahr-Lanteh, throughout its course in Cœlosyria, between the Libanus and the Anti-Libanus, is exactly the same as the Leontes. I have no hesitation in believing that the ancient locality, signs of which are very distinctly recognisable at the Khan-el-Kasmieh,* is positively the Leontoupolis of Scylax, the Leontos Oppidum of Pliny, and the Leontopolis of Strabo.

SOUR.

Sour is unquestionably the πόλις Τύρος λιμένα ἔχουσα ἐντὸς τείχους of Scylax, the Tyrus of Pliny, the Τύρος of

* Maundrell mentions in his narrative, that between Sarepta and Tyre, and at three hours' distance from the first-named place, he fell in with a large and deep river, which he calls Casimeer. It is evident that Maundrell has tried to express in English the name which he heard the people in Syria pronounce. Reland (pal. p. 291) after having quoted Maundrell, adds; "Ceterum nomen Casimeer videtur, satis benè cum Τάμυρας (quod nomen fluvii est secundum Strabonem) convenire. Sed Strabo Tamyram facit septentrionaliorem Sidone." So, if the learned Reland had not very attentively examined the question, he would have been completely led astray by the distorted name introduced by Maundrell. This proves how very necessary it is to have your ear well accustomed to the sounds of the Arab tongue, if you wish to travel with any profit in Syria.

Strabo, the Tyro of Antoninus's Itinerary, and of Peutinger's Table, and the Civitas Tyro of the Bordeaux Pilgrim. Every one agrees on this point, and it would be useless to prove what is proved already.

We now proceed (as we have commenced with the first portion of our route between Beyrout and Saydah) to compare the different figures of the distances between Saydah and Sour, as given by the ancient geographers.

According to Strabo, Tyre is distant two hundred stadia from Sidon ; Antonine's Itinerary and Peutinger's Table agree in reckoning XXIII miles between these two extreme points, whilst the Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem, if we were to take into account only what has been published of the text, would give but IIII+XII., that is XVI. miles only. Let us examine these different figures. The number in Antonine's Itinerary is exactly the same as that in Peutinger's Table ; it therefore appears most likely that this is the correct one : but if so, the distance given by Strabo is erroneous ; for if there were, according to this author's statement, four hundred stadia from Beyrout to Saydah, and if those four hundred stadia were only equal to XXIX. or XXX. miles, given as the distance between these two cities by Antonine's Itinerary and by Peutinger's Table, it would be impossible to admit that the two hundred stadia given by Strabo as the distance between Sidon and Tyre, could be equal to the XXIV. miles which the two above-mentioned Itineraries make out as the distance between the two same points. Let us examine now the figures of the Bordeaux Itinerary. To make up the difference between the total of the two numbers mentioned in this Itinerary, and the XXIV. miles, which appears most likely to be the correct

one, there are only wanting eight units. But the name Ad Nonum of itself provides us at once with a well-established, and authentic number of IX. miles. Then it is necessarily the last cypher XII., given as the distance between the Mutatio Ad Nonum and Civitas Tyro, which is deficient. It ought to be XV.; and if we observe, that it was very easy for an awkward copyist to separate the two strokes of the V., the second sign of the cypher here mentioned, we find that in that case we should fall again precisely into the erroneous cypher XII. which has been printed. So it is most likely the cypher XV. which ought to be substituted for the cypher XII., and we shall have then the correct total IX+XV=XXIV. I consequently propose to make this correction in the text, and I feel the more confident in doing so, as it is in perfect accordance with the real distances.

RAZ-EL-AYN AND NAHR RAZ-EL-AYN.

Scylax, after having mentioned Tyre, pursues his course southward, and says: Παλαίτυρος πόλις καὶ ποταμὸς διὰ μέσης ρεῖ. Pliny quotes Palætyrus in the following phrase: Tyrus quondam insula . . . . circuitus XIX. M. passuum est, intra Palætyro inclusâ; and lastly, Strabo is still more explicit. He writes thus: Μετὰ δὲ τὴν Τύρον ἡ παλαίτυρος ἐν τριάκοντα σταδίοις. Strabo, in his enumeration of the Phœnician localietis, invariably proceeds from north to south; consequently Palætyrus was situated to the southward of Tyre, according to the implicit statement of both Scylax and Strabo, and about a league and a half distant from the metropolis. But such being the case, it is impossible not to place Palætyrus at Raz-el-Ayn. Here, indeed, are still to be seen the

ancient wells which have been admired by all successive travellers, and ruins which attest the presence of an ancient town. Besides, at Raz-el-Ayn, there is a river, a very insignificant one it is true, but which, nevertheless, bears the name of Nahr Raz-el-Ayn. I may be allowed to consider it as the ποταμός which Scylax mentions as flowing through the town of Palætyrus.

Some modern writers have been inclined to place Palætyrus on the site of Adloun. But such an opinion can scarcely be accepted, first, because Adloun is to the north of Sour, whilst Palætyrus stood to the south of Tyre; and besides the distance is too great from Sour to Adloun, (without taking into account the Leontis which divides the two localities) to admit of Alexander's having employed the ruins of Palætyrus, in the works he constructed for the reduction of Tyre; a fact attested by Diodorus Siculus. Already Reland, with his usual sagacity, has placed Palætyrus at Raz-el-Ayn; and I merely join cordially in corroborating his opinion, which, it appears to me, cannot be seriously contested.

ES-CHEBRAYEH.

To the north, and a few hundred yards distant from the Raz-el-Abiadh, are some considerable ruins, called by the Arabs, Es-Chebrayeh. There can be no doubt that some ancient city has existed in this place. But what the name of that city was, I am completely at a loss to decide; not having, as yet, discovered any trace of it in any of the ancient authors I have had the opportunity of consulting.

RAZ-EL-ABIADH.

This is the chalk-hill which Pliny calls Promontorium Album. The modern name is a literal translation of the ancient one.

ESKANDEROON.

After having crossed the Raz-el-Abiadh, you fall in as you come down to the beach, with the ruins called Eskanderoon by the Arabs. The Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem is the only work in which this place is named. After the mention of Tyre, we read as follows: —Mutatio Alexandroschene, M. XII., from which it appears that this relay was twelve miles distant from Tyre, on the road to Ptolemais, or St. Jean d'Acre. Ἀλέξανδρου σκήνη means Alexander's tent. Is it an encampment of the Macedonian hero which has given its name to the town built on the same spot? The supposition is very probable.

OMM-EL-AAMID.

Following the old Roman road, you perceive upon the heights to the left, distant only a few furlongs from Eskanderoon, some shafts of columns rising above the high thorny briars. If in spite of the obstinate resistance of your moukris and dragoman, who protest there is nothing to be seen in the place (although the modern name of Omm-el-Aamid, or the Mother of Pillars, gives a very different promise) you ascend the ridges that lead to the columns, you will be amply repaid for your trouble by the sight of immense ruins of a very remote period, which alone deserve an investigation of many days. But is it possible to assign any historical name to this city which

covers such an extensive surface? I regret to say, no. I have vainly studied and sought in the historians and geographers of old for some indication of this important place. I have found none whatever; others may, perhaps, be more fortunate, and I shall rejoice to hear of their success.

AKHZIB OR ES-ZIB.

I give purposely these two pronunciations of the same word, because both are indifferently used by the Arabs. The second, however, I take for an alteration. Akhzib is a rising-ground overhanging the Roman road, and close to the sea-shore; whilst Omm-el-Aamid is two or three thousand yards distant from the beach. Akhzib is unquestionably the πόλις τῶν Ἐκδίππων of Scylax, the Oppidum Ecdippa of Pliny, and the Mutatio Ecdippa of the Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem. This last places Ecdippa at a distance of twelve miles from Alexandroschene, which is sufficiently correct.

NAHR-EL-MEZRAAH.

After the town which he calls πόλις τῶν Ἐκδίππων, Scylax places a ποταμός or river, without giving the name. For once we have no choice. This river is necessarily the Nahr-el-Mezraah, which, though not a very considerable stream, is still the only one that can be called a river between Akhzib and Akka.

AKKA.

Here again it is impossible to have a doubt; Akka is unquestionably the Ἄκη πόλις of Scylax, the Colonia Claudia Cæsaria Ptolemais, quondam Aké, of Pliny, the Ἄκη of Strabo, the Ptolemais of Antonine's Itinerary, and

of Peutinger's Table, and the Civitas Ptolemais of the Bordeaux pilgrim.

Let us now examine the distances stated in the ancient Itineraries as existing between Tyre and Aké, or Ptolemais. Antonine's Itinerary gives XXXII. miles; another reading of the same gives only XXX.; Peutinger's Table XXXII.; and lastly the Bordeaux Itinerary gives XII. miles from Tyre to Alexandroschene; XII. from Alexandroschene to Ecdippa, and VIII. from Ecdippa to Ptolemais, altogether XXXII. miles. These three numbers being in exact coincidence, we must conclude that the second reading (giving XXX. miles) in some copies of Antonine's Itinerary is to be rejected as erroneous.

Akka being the extreme point which I was enabled to visit on the Phœnician coast, I shall end here my review of the ancient geographical authorities, and I hasten to resume the narrative of our journey, without regretting the length of a digression that has, I hope, thrown some light upon several points hitherto involved in obscurity.

December 19th.

By ten minutes after seven we had left St. Jean d'Acre, and were moving southward through the plain of Acre, or the Merdj-sahel-Akka. Five hundred yards distant from the city walls there is a small hillock, known by the inhabitants under the name of the French mount. It was there General Bonaparte placed in battery the few field-pieces which he had brought from Egypt to the attack of St. Jean d'Acre. All this plain is excellent soil, and highly cultivated; but the rains have cut up the roads, and we cannot get on as fast as we should like.

Half an hour after leaving the town, we cross a muddy stream, on the margin of which some Arab women are

busy washing their tattered linen. We observe here a strange phenomenon: mole-hills, innumerable and quite fresh, are spread all over the plain; but such mole-hills! a yard high, and three or four yards in circumference. Of what size can be the moles who turn up such a mass of earth? Our moukri Sayd pretends that they are grey, and as large as our domestic cats. I am inclined to believe him, but I confess that I should have been glad to have procured one of these extraordinary moles, to verify the fact.

After two hours' march we reached the foot of a hillock quite round, and most likely artificial. It is about fifteen or twenty yards high, the base entirely covered with rubbish; and I cannot help, when I look at it, thinking of the mounds of Nineveh. Who knows if well-directed trenches would not bring to light, here as at Khorsabad, some important discoveries? However that may be, this enormous mound bears the name of Et-Tell-Kisan, and a small fountain on the foreground in the direction of the plain of Acre, is called the Ain-et-Tell. From this place we discover very plainly, to our left, and in advance on the heights, the villages of Kirkeh, Beroneh, Ed-Damoun, Er-Raouys, and Tamrah. These villages form something like a right-angled triangle, the summits of which are occupied by Kirkeh, Tamrah, and Er-Raouys, whilst Ed-Damoun and Beroneh lie upon the hypothenuse. Among the four sacerdotal towns of the tribe of Asher, we find mentioned in Joshua (XXI. 13), the name of a locality which the Greek version transcribes by Χελκατ. Does not this village of Kirkeh, which we find here, occupy the site of the biblical town? I believe, without venturing to affirm, that it does.

After having got over the Tell-Kisan, our march still leads us through the plain for about a thousand yards, and we enter upon ground which gradually rises by slightly marked degrees. Numerous tombs, cut out of the rock, to the right and left of our road, appear in the neighbourhood of a ruined Mezraah (farm) called Et-Theireh. After this we pass through a pretty valley of no great extent, where we fall in at every step with distinct traces of an ancient paved road. By half-past ten we reach a higher ridge, and still follow the same road, leaving to our right, distant about half a league, on a height, the village of Abillin ;* probably the very same from which the celebrated Sire Jean d'Abilin, the sage chronicler of the *Assises of Jerusalem*, derived his name. To the right and left the hills are covered over with holm-oaks and briars.

Up to a quarter past twelve, that is, for more than an hour and a half, we have been proceeding along the old road, through an agreeable valley, which opens into the Merdj (or plain) El-Bathouf. Here are the mill and the ruined khan of El-Bedaouieh, where we stop to breakfast. This khan is on the declivity of an isolated and regular hillock, in shape something like the Tell-Kisan ; but from the rocks appearing through the soil, it cannot be supposed to be artificial. To the right and left the plain extends a few thousand yards, but it scarcely reaches a league forward, and we descry before us, on the hills which enclose it, the village of Safourieh.

* In the book of Joshua (xix. 28) we read, among the towns of the tribe of Asher, a Hebrew name which has been transcribed Ebron. But is this transcription correct? Nothing proves that it is so, and from the way in which this word Abillin is written in Arabic بلّين I should almost be inclined to think that this place is the site of the town mentioned by Joshua.

Several villages are situated in proximity to the Merdj-el-Bathouf, and to the left of the road leading to Safourieh. These are, Kafer-Mendah, at only twenty minutes' walk from Bir-el-Bedaouieh ; then, at the bottom of the valley, Lebayneh, El-Aczir, and Roummaneh. The two first are distant about thirty minutes' walk from each other ; and from Aczir to Roummaneh requires twenty minutes. Roummaneh lying at the foot of the ridge, upon which is situated Safourieh, occupies the site of the place called Rimmon, belonging to the tribe of Zabulon, (Josh. xix. 13) for Josephus (Ant. v. 1) assigns to this tribe the territory enclosed between the lake of Gennesareth, Mount Carmel, and the sea. As to the villages of Lebayneh and El-Aczir, I cannot find any biblical localities to which they may be referred.

During our two hours' halt at the Khan El-Bedaouieh, our entomologists have well employed their leisure. By fifty-five minutes past one we get on horseback again, and enter the Merdj-el-Bathouf. Six minutes after leaving the khan we cross a small morass formed by a little muddy stream, and we take altogether twenty minutes crossing the merdj (plain), then we begin ascending the Safourieh ridges. After having surmounted and descended one of these, we follow a ravine which leads us, by forty minutes past two o'clock, between the village of Safourieh, and the burying-ground which it divides from the village. To the right and left the ground is very stony, and all around are accumulated vast heaps of ancient fragments, certifying abundantly the departed splendour of this miserable hamlet.

Safourieh is indeed a memorable place ; Josephus calls it Sepphoris, and it appears from his narrative, that it was

then the strongest fortress in Galilee. At a later period it received the name of Dio-Cæsarea. Safourieh was the seat of one of the five Sanhedrims of Judæa. It was reduced by the Romans commanded by Varus, and Herod Agrippa made it the most important station in the country. In the year 339 of the Christian era, an insurrection of the Jews having broken out at Dio-Cæsarea, the Cæsar Gallus left Antioch to crush the revolt ; all the inhabitants were slaughtered, and the town rased to the ground. From that time it never recovered any importance.

A few hundred yards further on, are two watering places for cattle cut out of the rock,—these are called the Ain-Safourieh. After having passed a small plain planted with olive trees, the road leads through the Ouad-el-Aama, a stony and melancholy valley, from which you have to ascend the opposite ridge by a very difficult path. Having reached the top of the hill, you discover, to the right on the height, and about six thousand yards off, a Mussulman oualy (or chapel) : this is En-Naby-Sayn ; at the foot of it, in the foreground, stands the Greek church called Mensa Domini, and behind it the town of Nazareth, the En-Nasara of the present day. I will not attempt to describe the emotion which we all felt at the first sight of this humble city where the Virgin conceived the Saviour of the world.

To reach Nazareth the descent is very rapid, so we deemed it prudent to dismount and proceed on foot. By twenty minutes past four we stopped at the gate of the Casa Nuova, belonging to the Franciscan convent of Nazareth. As we had already experienced at St. Jean d'Acre, the holy men who lent us the shelter of their hospitable roof, collected with eager solicitude around

us, and vied with each other in kind attentions. It is impossible not to feel deeply moved by such touching goodness.

Whilst our dinner was getting ready, we went to present our respects to the superior of the convent. Here again we met with a most pleasing reception. But night has come on in the meanwhile, and it is too late to visit the holy places; we are therefore compelled to wait until to-morrow morning.

December 20th.

This morning very early we were on foot. Besides that we had a pretty long day's march before us, we were, above all, anxious to visit the church of the Annunciation. Without loss of time, we obtained the company of one of the fathers to guide us, and point out the sanctuaries which we were so impatient to examine. The present church is built on the site of the old one, erected by St. Helena; and some remains of that venerable structure are still recognisable in the court of the convent. From the sacristy a staircase of primitive simplicity leads to a chamber excavated in the solid rock. This, we were told by the monk who directed us, was the habitation of a friend of the Virgin Mary.

A short corridor, likewise cut out of the rock, leads to a second apartment, as simple as the first. This is the chamber of the Annunciation. I pity, from my inmost soul, the man who can find himself in such a place without feeling a strong and deep emotion; his insensibility must be affected. If some travellers are unhappily inclined to boast that they have stood there unmoved, I class them with those vainglorious sceptics who think they lower their dignity, unless they treat with ridicule

all that exceeds their limited comprehension. Such, however, is usually the error of youth. He who, at twenty, scoffs at religious belief, is very likely at a later period to fall into an opposite extreme, and to exceed in faith, as once he did in incredulity. For myself, I avow, without hesitation, that upon entering this venerable cave, I was moved to tears. Some years ago perhaps I might have been ashamed to acknowledge this; but I have lived long enough to alter my opinions, and I deem myself most fortunate in the change. No doubt, in many people's eyes, I am rendering myself ridiculous by this confession; but on such a subject I care little for the judgment of the world. I had a strong desire to carry away with me some small particles detached from the walls of the holy cave. I succeeded in obtaining them, and have divided them between my good mother and several other friends. They are simple enough of heart to prefer this humble *souvenir* to the most precious jewels which I could have collected in my travels. But let us return to our journey.

Before eight o'clock we were ready to mount our horses. As I wished to take with me a man who had a thorough knowledge of the route, with a view of obtaining from him as much geographical information as possible, I begged the good fathers to provide me with a faithful and trustworthy guide. Thanks to their obliging recommendation, I have enlisted a fine brave fellow, an Arab by birth, and standard-bearer in a squadron of irregular Turkish cavalry. I intend taking him as far as Jerusalem only. He is called Mohammed-Arha-Beyrakdar; and, as his face and bearing please me exceedingly, our terms are soon settled. At a quarter past eight we are all in the saddle and in motion. Mohammed sticks to me as if he

were my shadow, and I soon discover that he will prove a valuable acquisition. He knows every corner of the country we propose to traverse; speaks Arabic with perfect purity, and I sometimes ask myself, when chatting with him, whether I am talking to a scholar or a soldier. We shall see, by and bye, that I had been very lucky in engaging him.

On leaving Nazareth we enter a valley which narrows as we go along, for about an hour, until it reduces itself to the bed of a torrent. Here we are obliged to turn off to the left by a zigzag path along the mountain-side, until we reach the level of a magnificent plain, spreading out on all sides as far as the eye can reach. The features of the valley we have just crossed are most lovely; and no doubt, when we pass it again in spring, we shall find it beautifully green and full of flowers, for there is water in abundance.

We have found on our road, distant 4½ furlongs from Nazareth, a small pond, where rain-water is collected: it is called El-Mehafer. About a thousand yards further on is a very abundant well, named Bir-el-Emir. Here, as in many other parts of Syria, a sarcophagus has answered the purpose of a trough until the well was converted into a place for washing woollen clothes. Nothing can be more fresh and graceful than the surrounding scenery—a complete bower of orange trees and cactus. To the right of our road, and on the other side of the rocky heights that bound it, just opposite to Bir-el-Emir, is a village called Iafa. It is easy to recognise in this the Ἰάφά, which Josephus mentions as one of the places he caused to be surrounded by walls when the Romans threatened to invade Gallilee. A vain precaution, as we shall soon discover. (Bell. Jud. iii., vii., 31.)

After the sack of Jotapata, Trajan, commander of the Tenth Legion, was sent by Vespasian, at the head of two thousand infantry, and a thousand horse, to invest and besiege Iafa, the population of which, inspired by the example of the Jotapatanians, and thinking themselves quite safe behind a double row of fortifications, prepared for a desperate resistance. But too much confidence led to their ruin. Seeing the small force that was sent to attack them, they imagined they could easily overpower it; they therefore marched headlong against the Romans, but gave way at the first collision, and were thrown back behind their outward barriers, which the legionaries penetrated along with them. Those who had remained within the town hastened to shut the inner gates. The Romans immediately did the same with the outer ones; and twelve thousand Galilæans were slain between the two ramparts, uttering more dreadful imprecations against their own fellow-citizens than against the enemy by whom they were slaughtered. Trajan, wishing then to reserve for Titus the honour of taking the town, sent a message to Vespasian, informing him of the state of things, and asking him to despatch his son to reap the glory and finish the siege of Iafa. Titus marched, in consequence, with five hundred horse and a thousand infantry, and immediately on his arrival the assault began. The terrified Galilæans opposed but a slight resistance, and were all put to the sword, excepting only the women and children.

The book of Joshua (xix. 12) mentions a station of the tribe of Zabulon, called Japhia; this is probably again our Iafa. Reland thought he had discovered the biblical Japhia in Heïfa, a town placed at the foot of Mount Carmel, on the site of Sycaminos; but the aspirated

orthography of the word Heïfa destroys all connexion between it and the word Iafa, which admits of no aspiration.

At a quarter-past nine we had reached the summit of the winding-path which leads down into the plain. This is the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, now called Merdj-ebni-Aâmer. It is six leagues wide, and about twelve in length from north to south. To our left the valley is majestically closed in by the Djebel-Thour, Mount Tabor. Before us is the Djebel-ed-Dalry. In the distance, as far as the eye can reach, is Djenin, where we intend to quarter for the night; and lastly, to the right, fading away in the horizon, we see the range of hills among which is situated El-Ledjoun, the Megiddo of the holy Scriptures.

As we reach the level of the plain of Esdraelon, we leave at a few hundred yards to our left a wretched hamlet, now uninhabited, called El-Mezraah. Then, after only a few minutes' ride further on, we stop to breakfast near the ruins of a deserted farm. Our kitchen is soon established on the slope of a little low mound, and we remain there two whole hours, doing our best to kill time in looking for insects which we cannot find. There is not a single stone on the ground, which is composed of the richest vegetable soil, and, consequently, our entomologists have no chance of adding to their discoveries. By forty-five minutes past eleven we strike our camp and resume our march, following our luggage which has gone on in advance. To our left, and distant a little more than a league, we leave the village of Iksal, built at the foot of the mountains of Nazareth. This is the Chesulloth of the holy Scriptures, a town of the tribe of Issachar; in the book of Joshua (xix. 18) it is named Chesulloth. But these transcriptions are most likely erroneous, and there

is every reason to believe from the modern structure of the name, that the true pronunciation, whatever the advocates of Masoretic criticism may say, was Ksalouth or Eksalouth. Another proof of what I advance is, the name of Ἐξαλους given to this locality in the acts of the council held in Jerusalem in 536, and in the "Onomasticon" of Eusebius.

Still further on, and quite close to the foot of Mount Tabor, stands at the present day the village of Dabourieh, which may very probably be identified with the town of Tabor, or Daberath, of the tribe of Issachar, which we find mentioned in the book of Joshua (xix. 12), and in the Chronicles (i.; vi. 72). The same town is named Δαβειρὼν in the Greek version, and St. Jerome calls it "Dabeira." Evidently there is no great difference between all these designations and the modern name of Dabourieh.

The ground we travel over continues wonderfully fertile, notwithstanding that the plain rises a little. At a quarter past twelve we are in sight of the village of Naijn, situated about a league distant to our left, at the foot of the Djebel-ed-Dahy. Naijn is the village where Christ raised from the dead the son of the widow. Eusebius writes the word Naïm, but Saint Luke (vii. 11) writes it Ναΐν, coinciding exactly with the Arabic pronunciation of the present day. A little further on, in the same direction, is Aÿn-Dour, the Endor of the translators of the Bible, a village celebrated for the visit paid by King Saul to the witch who conjured up in his presence the shadow of Samuel, and prophesied to him that he should perish at Gilboa in the battle in which he was about to engage with the Philistines.

Above Naijn, and nearly on the summit of the Djebel-ed-Dahy, is a village called Ed-Dahy, containing a small

oualy, or Mussulman chapel. By a quarter-past twelve the plain declines again, and a quarter of a league further on, we cross the road leading from Naijn to El-Afouleh. El-Afouleh is situated to our right, about half a league distant from another village called El-Fouleh, built on the summit of a small hill, at the foot of which we are passing; for us Frenchmen these names of El-Afouleh and El-Fouleh awaken glorious memories. Here began the battle of Mount Tabor.

Before El-Fouleh* a small muddy stream intersects our road. The plain continues to preserve an appearance of extraordinary fertility; everywhere it is covered with high corn-stubble, through which we perceive a great many footmarks, such as might have been left by a number of men running away in haste either on foot or on horseback. All these traces are in the same direction; and, with the curiosity natural to travellers, I inquire from Mohammed what may have caused them? He then tells me, without the least emotion, that, only yesterday, the Arabs from the hills of El-Ledjoun came to attack the inhabitants of some villages of Mount Tabor; that they fought all day without much damage on either side; only a few men and women were killed here and there in the skirmish. But the worst of the matter was, that a large quantity of cattle has been carried off by the assailants, and the tracks we notice mark the line of their retreat, with the captured plunder. The story is encouraging to travellers, and gives us an idea of the security we may look for in passing through this country. Nevertheless we go on with merry hearts, rejoicing under the glorious sun, which warms us

* El-Fouleh was occupied during the Crusades by a fortress built by the Knights-Templars, called Castrum Fabæ, the Castle of the Bean. This is the literal translation of the Arab name.

rather more than we desire ; and ready for anything, even to do battle with the Bedouins, if chance should throw such adventures in our way.

On leaving the foot of the hill upon which El-Fouleh is built, we descry at a league and a half to our left, and on the northern declivity of the Djebel-el-Mazar, the village of Soulem ; this is again a biblical name. Soulem appears to be the Shunem of the tribe of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), the same as the Soulem of Eusebius and Saint Jerome, and also the village of the Shunamite.

Nine furlongs further on, towards the south-east, and a little higher up the mountain, is the village of Nouris. By a quarter-past one o'clock we cross the road which leads from El-Afouleh to Zeraïjn, at a place where the plain rises a little. Zeraïjn is the Jezreel of the tribe of Issachar, that is to say, the site of the palace of Ahab, where Jezebel's dead body was devoured by dogs.

By half-past one we cross the bed of a dry ravine; and after leaving to our left, distant a league and a half, the village of El-Mazar, built on the summit of the Djebel-el-Mazar, we arrive, by marching directly southward, at the foot of a hillock of no great height, upon which stands the hamlet of Omkeibleh. Here again we cross a beaten road leading to the village of El-Djelameh, which we perceive about two leagues off to the eastward, and at the bottom of a valley formed by the Djebel-el-Mazar, and by the hill upon which stands the village of Arraneh, distant only fourteen furlongs from the road we are following.

It is now about half-past two, and another hour elapses before we reach Djenin, a considerable town situated at the entrance of the plain of Esdraelon, and at the foot of the mountains of Naplouse. During this last hour's ride

we have come up with some Arab horsemen, going like ourselves to Djenin. They soon enter into conversation, and our new companions make no scruple of treating us with a familiarity to which we are very little accustomed. For them we are plain Touar and Selcy (meaning Edward and De Scilcy), for they have taken good care to inquire our names at first, to mutilate them according to their own fancy. But as we are intruders in their country it would be bad policy to show ourselves offended, so we pay them off in the same coin, with which they appear perfectly satisfied.

On our way we encounter herds of antelopes, and a sudden fancy seizes me to show my skill as a marksman. Either I am a bad shot, or (to save my vanity) I think I must have fired at too great a distance. Yet I have had my moment of glory: out of five antelopes upon which I fired, four bolt off, but one remains. I am already preparing a shout of triumph, when all of a sudden the loiterer starts to its legs, and in three bounds is up and running with the foremost. Decidedly the animal has received a fright.

Nothing can be prettier than Djenin; before us are groves of palm trees, and orchards enclosed by hedges of cactus: above these rises the minaret of a mosque. A rapid spring furnishes the adjacent gardens and meadows with an ample supply of pure water. We follow for some time the margin of this rivulet and at length enter Djenin, surrounded by a throng of the inhabitants, who press on us with eager curiosity.

A khan, even more than usually dirty, receives us for the night. All its approaches are peopled with lookers-on, grave but civil and inoffensive. Whilst waiting for

our dinner, I chat with the principal personages amongst them, and graciously treat them with a pipe, which act of generosity completes their high opinion of our importance. Our conversation embraces a variety of serious subjects, Islamism, the Prophet, &c., &c., and as I have adopted the general rule of never offending anybody's religious prejudices, I become at once a favourite with the magnates of Djenin. But the most agreeable society must break up; the weather is bitterly cold, the dinner is ready, and so I take a hasty leave of new acquaintances, who would very willingly follow me into the khan, but Mohammed, with a most persuasive gesture, invites them to remain outside. I trust my bitterest enemy may never be condemned to pass a night in the khan of Djenin.

Beyond all doubt our cook, Constantine, is a consummate rascal. We learn from André that the day before yesterday the sacrilegious varlet stole everything he could lay his hands on in the convent of St. Jean d'Acre; and that yesterday he has repeated the same manœuvre at Nazareth. Robbing Catholics seems to this fellow quite a religious obligation, which he strictly observes. Patience! in a few days we shall be in Jerusalem, and then I will settle accounts with master Constantine after my own fashion, and call him to such restitution that the good fathers of the Holy Land may acquit us of being accomplices in his roguery.

CHAPTER III.

Djenin.—An eagle shot.—Samour.—Mamistra.—Arbela.—Rebellious horses.—A difficult chase.—Night adventure with robbers.—Naplouse.—Shechem.—Neapolis.—Jacob's Well.—Beth-Dagon.—A khan in ruins.—Seiloun.—A widow in a khan.—The Gibeonites.—Ataroth.—Er-Rama.—First sight of Jerusalem.—Alexander the Great.—First impressions of the Holy City.—M. Botta, the French Consul.—Dinner and Music.

December 21st.

Long before daylight, for many good reasons, I was up and stirring. Yesterday before dinner I had taken a little walk in the direction of the mosque, and had admired the splendid orange and palm trees with which it is surrounded. This morning at dawn I repeat my visit to this pretty spot. Yesterday I had also greatly admired the damsels of Djenin as they came down to fetch water from the fountain. This morning I have enjoyed again this innocent pleasure, and I have had an opportunity of passing in review all the beauties of the place. Nothing can be more pleasing than the graceful ease with which they carry on their heads, supported by the right arm, the vessel that contains the provision of the day. Their dress is also most picturesque, and becomes them admirably. I recommend to artists the arms and legs of these ladies, with their bracelets of massive silver, and I wish they may never have less graceful models to draw from.

The modern Djenin has taken the place of Ginæa, the same of which Josephus has given (Bel. Jud. iii. 4) a very

pleasing description, and which is still correct in all points up to the present day. Of the ancient Ginæa all that remains are a few foundations of walls close to the mosque; the inhabitants pick the stones out of them as if they were a convenient quarry. There might also possibly be an identity between Djenin, and Engannim of the tribe of Issachar (Jos. xix. 21; and xxi. 29); the Hebraic form of this word and the presence of the beautiful spring of Djenin incline me to this belief.

By a few minutes after eight we leave Djenin, and, entering a rocky confined valley, direct our march towards Naplouse, where we hope to arrive early. Almost everywhere our path preserves unmistakeable signs of an ancient paved road. From time to time appear some old olive trees; on the branches of one of these sleeps, without dreaming of any mischief, a very fine eagle, who seems unconscious of our approach until we are close to his resting-place; but, awaking too late, he receives a shot from Edward. Sportsmen do not kill eagles at every shot, not even in Syria more than anywhere else. The consequence is that my young friend is much envied by the ordinary Nimrods of our caravan, I mean by Belly and Loysel. Since our departure from Beyrout, Belly fires at everything, and kills his bird very often. Loysel fires at everything also, but misses with equal constancy. His sporting failures produce unceasing merriment; for instance, we meet with lapwings in all directions; the country we are travelling through seems their exclusive domain, and Belly kills every day sufficient for our meals; Edward kills some now and then, Loysel never kills any. One might think that the little jeering cry which these pretty birds scream out as they fly away had been invented on

purpose to teaze him. One day, as we all burst out laughing because he had just thrown away as usual two more shots upon these enchanted lapwings, I asked Loysel what the unfortunate creatures had done to him, that he should be so ferocious against them.

"What have they done to me!" said he, with most comical indignation, "the villains won't allow me to kill them!" There was no answering such a just complaint.

From time to time the rocks present some signs of ancient architecture. Just at the end of Djenin we discover the steps of a staircase, and opposite, a tower called El-burj, which we leave on the height to our right. About a league distant from Djenin, on the other side of the road, we fall in with a sepulchral cave excavated in a rock on the declivity of the hill.

For about an hour we pass through ravines, then we ascend a small flat eminence which takes us to the village of Qabatieh. This village, surrounded by gardens, is built on the side of a wooded hill, covered with olive trees. After passing through Qabatieh we descend again into another hollow, where we still find distinct signs of the ancient road. A small, narrow, and deeply enclosed plain soon opens to our left. This is the plain of Mecilieh, so called from a village distant about an hour's ride from our road. Beyond the plain the valley becomes narrower again, and the hill sides to the right and left are much wooded. Finally, after three hours' march, the country opens suddenly, and the road enters into the plain of Sanour to the left of some labourers' huts, which here, as everywhere else, go by the generic name of El-Mezraah (the farm).

We find here the same soil as in the plain of Esdraelon ; but the Merj-Sanour has greater moisture, and Mohammed tells me that in winter it becomes a lake. This fine plain spreads out to a considerable distance, about three leagues to our left, whilst to the right of our road the hills are only a few hundred yards off. At about five or six thousand yards in front of us an eminence, detached from the mass of hills, is crowned by a village, which from afar looks like a fortress. It is called Sanour, the residence of a rich and powerful Scheikh, who reigns as sovereign over all the country we are about to travel through before entering the mountains of Naplouse.

The Merj-Sanour is enclosed within a belt of mountains of a very woody and agreeable aspect. We discover two villages built on the southern declivity of the plain ; these are Meltzaloun, fourteen furlongs from Sanour, and Seyr, about six miles further on.

In the book of Maccabees (i. ; ix. 2,) mention is made of a Galilean station called Μαισαλὼθ, and I am inclined to find it again in Meltzaloun. Massaloth, according to Maccabees, was in the territory of Arbela ; and Josephus places Arbela (xii. 2, 1 ; and xiv. 15, 4) at no great distance from Sepphoris. He tells us that Bacchides, sent by Demetrius against Judæa, came with his army to encamp before Arbela, a town of Galilee. Sanour occupies the strongest position in the entire country. It seems almost impossible that the hill on which it stands should not have been anciently the site of a fortress ; perhaps Arbela stood there !* What appears certain is,

* However, I must not conceal that another locality proposed for Arbela, identical with the ruins found at no great distance from Tiberias and actually called Irbid, seems also plausible enough.

that it would be difficult to find an encamping ground more suitable to an army than the plain through which the ancient road passes, and which extends all the way between Sanour and Meltzaloun; supposing of course that the commander of this army might have the prudence to occupy with a strong line of outposts all the approaches by which an enemy could advance against him.

In the foreground of the hill of Sanour is a lower hillock, on the top of which is raised a mound so regular that it must be a tumulus. Down by the foot of these two eminences and winding along their base, the ancient road is in better preservation than anywhere else. On a near inspection Sanour resembles a square fortress. Only a few hundred yards off, and on the flank of the same range of hills, upon one of which Sanour stands, is a hamlet of miserable appearance called Djerbah, and a small oualy in ruins.

We consult a moment with each other to decide if we shall go up to Sanour and halt there for breakfast. Instinctively we prefer the open air. Under an olive tree, far from the village, we shall perhaps escape the annoyance of vulgar curiosity. We therefore determine to push on for half an hour longer, notwithstanding the rebellious cravings of our appetites; and alight in a field half-way up the narrow valley which divides Sanour from Djerbah.

The weather is delightful; myriads of beautiful insects swarm around us, and we hunt them with great zeal whilst our breakfast is being prepared. As we are busily engaged in packing up our entomological treasures, a stout powerful young man, about thirty years old, comes up with us at a hand-gallop, followed by two other

horsemen, whose tattered garments contrast with the elegant dress of their leader. All three are well armed, but from their countenances it is quite clear they have no hostile intentions. Mohammed and the new-comer exchange salaams and shake hands, and I join in the conversation to ascertain who is our friend. He proves to be Khaled, son of the Scheikh of Sanour, travelling through his estate on a tour of inspection amongst his farmers. Of course we are as polite as possible to such an eminent personage, and invite him to breakfast with us. He accepts without ceremony, and orders one of his companions to go on with the inspection in his stead.

This order is given with the air of an autocrat, and accordingly the Arab is very soon on horseback and off on his master's errand. In the meanwhile here we are, the hosts of the young Scheikh of Sanour. He sees us picking up and pinning down insects here and there, he discovers the eagle which Edward had killed in the morning, and it quite puzzles him that people should throw away their time and their powder upon such unprofitable game; last and worst of all, the culinary preparations which that arch rogue Constantine elaborates under his eyes, give him, apparently, a very poor opinion of our fare. We sink in his estimation before the repast begins. He takes us for physicians at the best, and he would almost prefer to dine with his illustrious father. He may please himself for what we care.

Still, whilst smoking our pipes, the brave fellow keeps peeping at our arms, which we exhibit to him one after the other, at his request; the thing that most astonishes him is Loysel's powder-flask. At the sight of this

implement, which seems to him of incomparable value, the Scheikh's eyes acquire additional lustre. Here is a famous opportunity of recovering the ground we have lost in his opinion. I prevail upon Loysel to give up his powder-flask, and I beg the Scheikh to accept it as a remembrance of our meeting. Of course there is no need to repeat our offer; but what requires to be explained more carefully is, the mode of managing the spring. After every lesson he tells me with great alacrity: "Thaïjb, fehmt!" (Very good, I understand.) He then tries and fails. I have an idea that some day or other he will blow himself up with our unlucky present.*

The desired effect is produced; we have become men of distinction again in the eyes of the Scheikh. It is his turn now to show off the grandee. Guess a little what he will think of to prove his generosity? He draws from his breast a pocket-handkerchief with one corner tied up; he unties it with a sigh, and pulls out a rhazy, worth about twenty piastres, that is to say, the equivalent of about a five-franc piece, and slips it into my hand. At first I cannot understand his meaning, and I look with rather an astonished air at the diminutive piece of gold so generously bestowed, asking myself what I am to do with it? I confess I was some time before I could comprehend that he was giving me a *pour boire*.† When I found it out at last, I hastened to return his coin, ordering Mohammed to explain to him and telling him myself that I made presents but accepted none.

So we have changed parts; but the Sanour Scheikh is

* Alas! I have learnt that since our meeting at Sanour, the poor Scheikh Khaled has been killed in a brawl with some of his countrymen.

† The small gratuity, so called, usually given to the Parisian cab-drivers, in addition to their fare.

by no means affronted; he pulls out his handkerchief again, ties up his money as before, and we hear no more about it. From this moment he has but one thought, that of taking leave of us and letting us breakfast by ourselves. However, as he is about to mount his charger, a fine idea crosses him. Addressing Mohammed, he says, "Well, I also wish that the Frenchman should keep something to remember our meeting; I present him my horse,—tell him it belongs to him." His horse was an old Rosinante, perfectly worn out in every limb; of course I refused again. No sooner are we rid of our visitor, who returns to Sanour in a gallop, than we sit down to breakfast; and whilst we enjoy our meal, our moukris, with their usual prudence, take off our horses' bridles and allow them to graze at liberty; a bright idea as we shall presently see.

We have halted now two long hours, and Naplouse is still at a distance; it is high time to start, so let us mount and move on. There is one small difficulty, which is, that some of our horses, who relish exceedingly the pasture-grounds of Sanour, play off all sorts of gambols to avoid being caught again, and gallop away towards Djebaa. Patience! the creatures will, no doubt, soon tire of this unusual exercise. But the moukris are the first to get tired; they throw down bridles and bits, and refuse to run any longer after the fugitives. The Abbé, my son, and myself are the three dismounted cavaliers, and we wear ourselves out in vain efforts to catch our cattle. Edward and Philippe in their turn go racing after them, but with no other result than wasting their own breath, and infusing new spirit into the mutineers.

Just as we had proposed starting from our breakfast-

ground, we descried a troop of horsemen coming round the hill of Sanour. Were they friends or foes? It was difficult to guess; and their sudden appearance made us still more angry with the carelessness of our moukris. We had been for a moment weak enough to imagine that the Scheikh, delighted with our politeness towards him, was sending us an escort. Such an idea was indeed exceedingly simple on our part. In a few minutes the troop I speak of came up with us, and we recognised a detachment of Turkish regular cavalry, on march to garrison some place near Naplouse. Our misfortune seemed greatly to amuse these gentlemen, who, for a moment, made a show of helping us to catch our horses, but succeeded in frightening them a great deal more, and then passed on.

My son and André had remained behind, waiting until my son's horse should be brought back to him; for myself, I had proceeded on foot, and grumbling, on the road to Djebaa. It was only at the entrance of the village that my horse and my son's horse gave in, and submitted most unwillingly; but as to the Abbé's charger, it was quite another matter. He threaded one after another all the lanes of Djebaa, leaped on the terraces, and from one house to the next; in short, he seemed to have wings. Whilst our friends were employed chasing this ill-conditioned animal, I tried to inflict a castigation on mine; but after only two blows of the whip, he began such a fantastic waltz, turning round and round on the same spot with such rapidity, that if he had not stopped, the punishment would have recoiled on me; three turns more, and I should have been off in a tangent over his ears.

At last the confounded horse of the Abbé is caught: Philippe, who is an excellent rider, leaps into the saddle, and, notwithstanding the generous entreaties of the real master of the brute, gives him a sound thrashing. We are delighted with his success, when, just as he is setting to rights the heavy musket which he carries slung across his shoulders, and not minding his horse, the rascally creature takes advantage of his inattention, rears, throws his rider on his back, and begins *de novo* all his tricks.

By this time Edward's indignation and mine pass all bounds, and we determine upon shooting the rebellious quadruped. Ten times we think his account is settled; we have him well covered, but just as we are going to pull the trigger, we always perceive peeping out in the very direction in which we are going to fire, the grinning face of some inhabitant of Djebaa, who rails at our impotent fury. It is enough to make us lose the little self-control we have left. The Abbé, who understands that we want to kill his horse, torments us with his supplications, and gets rebuffed accordingly. In short, we never can get an opportunity of shooting the beast; and after four mortal hours of this sport, that is, four hours of dreadful perspiration, Mohammed succeeds in recapturing the four-footed demon. The Abbé immediately mounts, and begins caressing him!!! He is assailed by the whole company with a perfect hurricane of abuse and maledictions—but he heeds us not! What can you do against the untiring patience of an Abbé? Nothing.

The sun was setting; our luggage had been gone four hours in advance; no doubt it had already reached Naplouse; and my son, whose horse awaited him at a

fountain, distant four hundred yards from Djebaa, had not yet made his appearance. My anxiety may be easily understood. Two roads, leading one to the right, the other to the left of the village, meet again at the entrance of the Sanour valley. How are we to guess which he will take ? Fortunately, after some minutes, he comes up by the road to the right, mounted on André's horse, André following on foot.

We were at last all assembled, but worn out with fatigue and in very bad humour, especially against the Abbé, for without his interference we should not have lost so much time ; and we had still a four hours' march before us by night, and in the mountains of Naplouse, mountains of which the inhabitants enjoy as bad a reputation as they deserve. Just as we have joined forces again, Mohammed, no doubt to cheer us, warns us to be quick, to ram down a bullet in each of our barrels, and to give him a charge for his own gun, all with the quietest and easiest manner in the world.

We are marching at last, for which we may be thankful ! André moves on first, for, by his account, he is afraid of nothing ; Mohammed comes next, then Philippe, then my son, then all the others. In less than half an hour it becomes quite dark, and Mohammed perpetually urges us to hurry on. Towards seven o'clock we are moving on through the darkest night, but far from dreaming of any mishap, when Mohammed, thinking he is speaking to my son, whom he supposes close behind him, but from whom he is separated by Philippe, points out a narrow field on the left hand side of the rocky defile which we are threading, and says in a whisper :

"Fih, nas! Fih, haramieh! Nemchi aleïhim." (See, men —thieves! Let us rush down upon them.) Philippe, who does not understand the invitation, makes no answer of course. Mohammed insists, "Nemchi!" (Let us go.) Still no answer. Then the gallant fellow, in a fury, rushes forward with his gun at his shoulder, and we hear the following words: "Aïch ente?" (Who goes there?) A silence. "Aïch ente, ya kelb?" (Who goes there, you dogs?) The same silence again, immediately broken this time by the explosion of Mohammed's gun, accompanied by the usual form of malediction: "Allah yelâanek, oua abouk, oua abou abouk!" (May Allah damn thee, thee and thy father, and the father of thy father!)

On the shot being fired, a dark form rose up, and tried to run off, but fell again heavily upon the earth, without uttering a groan. Other dark forms fled rapidly towards the mountain. Mohammed rides up to the man he has just slain, compels his horse to touch him with his foot, and then comes back quietly towards us. "Aïch kan?" say I to him. (What's the matter?) "Houa mat." (He is dead!) "Allah akbar!" (God is great!) "Nestâadjel." (Let us make haste.) And he fills his chibouk, and lights it as quietly as if he was sitting on the divan of a coffee-house. During the few minutes that this disagreeable scene lasted, I had ordered the whole party to alight. Every one of us cocked his piece, and, placing himself behind his horse, stood ready to fire. All executed this movement with satisfactory steadiness, and from that instant I felt convinced I had none with me but brave and resolute hearts.

On Mohammed's urgent remonstrance, we mounted our

horses again, and taking once more the road to Naplouse rode on at a rapid pace. For half an hour we remained on the *qui vive*, listening to the angry shouts that were sent after us from the heights ; but the gentlemen we had to deal with, convinced by experience that we were rough customers, contented themselves with shouting, and went no further.

It was nine o'clock when we entered Naplouse, somewhat concerned, I confess, for the possible consequences of the ill-timed adventure we had encountered on the way. At the gate of Naplouse we met our moukri, Schariar, who was waiting with a lantern, to lead us to our inn. After having threaded several narrow and muddy streets, we arrived at last through a series of stinking, filthy passages, at the foot of a staircase, something like the ladder of a henroost ; but at the top of this staircase we find a very handsome room, with a small terraced court in front, commanding the valley of Naplouse, and also a complete view of the mountain of Ebal. Behind us is the Gerizim, but concealed by the neighbouring houses.

Our host, who is a Christian, is very attentive, and extremely anxious that we should admire the lodging he has prepared for us. Indeed, we have met nowhere, excepting at Damascus, so comfortable and clean an inn as this of Naplouse ; it is, of course, a little infested with vermin—but how is that to be avoided in Syria ? During our meal, which we found only in preparation, notwithstanding the great advance our luggage had made, we talk over the affair of Djebaa, and all agree as to the necessity of being silent on the subject. In this country of Naplouse, scoring out a debt of bloodshed is no subject

for a jest; and we have every reason to be uneasy at the account we have run up this evening. The Abbé, who sees none but honest people everywhere, is very angry at what has happened. In his opinion, the man who has been shot was quietly enjoying a walk after dinner, intending no harm, and our consciences are burthened with a foul murder. I tell him it is all his fault, and that if he had not prevented us from killing his wretched brute of a horse, we should not have been surprised by night, nor placed in the disagreeable necessity of killing a man. This argument has no effect upon him, and I really believe that we part in ill-humour, though we bid each other good-night.

To have done with the scruples—certainly most praiseworthy ones—of this excellent friend, I will say at once that he obstinately retained his conviction with respect to Arab morals, until one day, when looking out for plants, quite alone as usual, and at some distance from the caravan, he found near Saydah, in the safest country in the world according to his estimate, a hollow, containing objects very different from the rare plants he was searching for—two dead bodies of men just slaughtered, and slaughtered for the miserable sum of a hundred piastres. No one ever took the trouble of inquiring by whom the deed had been done, and the perfect indifference of the people who passed by, when called upon by the Abbé to come and look on this horrid spectacle, made him reflect, no doubt, that the police constitutes an excellent institution in general, and might not be superfluous in Syria in particular.

As we must return again to Naplouse, once at least during our journey, we decide not to examine any of the curiosities of the place at this visit. Time presses upon

us, for we have still two days' march from hence to Jerusalem, and we are already on the eve of the 22nd of December. It is therefore agreed that we shall start to-morrow, early in the morning, so as to halt for the night at El-Bireh.

December 22nd.

Notwithstandiug our wish, we have not been able to start before eight o'clock. Our moukris, our horses, the idlers and mendicants crowding around us, form in the lane where we lodge a mass of confusion, through which it is very difficult to escape. Every one demands a bakhshish, which we refuse with a pertinacity equal to their entreaties. At last we succeed—no easy undertaking—in getting out of Naplouse with an accompaniment of abuse, and even stones, which the amiable children of the town hurl at us from the terraces as they look down upon our transit. Whilst riding through a miserable bazaar, we catch a hasty glimpse of an attractive portico of a church of the twelfth century, now transformed into a mosque, and before which we were not permitted to halt even for a moment. O hospitality! thou art but a vain word at Naplouse.

Having cleared the town, we find ourselves in a fresh valley, planted with aged olive trees, and irrigated by numerous springs of running water. Everywhere under the turf we discover vestiges of ancient buildings. Where we tread just now, stood the town of Shechem, the cherished city of the patriarchs; and the ruins we see are most probably those of Neapolis, which succeeded Shechem. To our left is the huge mass of Mount Ebal, with its base excavated into numerous funeral caves, remains of the necropolis of Shechem. To our right we admire the

summits of the Gêrizim, on the green side of which is pleasantly seated the modern Naplouse.

For about a mile we follow this delightful valley. As we are going to leave it, we pass before the well of the woman of Samaria, called Bir-Yakoub (Jacob's well) by the Arabs. A little further on towards the east is a small Mussulman oualy (chapel), said to be the tomb of Joseph. From this spot we turn suddenly southward, and enter another rich valley, which we follow during more than two hours. The wind blowing very strong from the south, incommodes us much, and I have great difficulty in taking notes as we ride along.

Nearly opposite the spot where the vale of Shechem opens into the second valley we are now in, we descry, at the foot of the surrounding hills to our left, the village of Azmout. A little further on, half-way up the declivity, and in nearly the same direction, stands the hamlet of Ed-Deir. A few furlongs further, but to the east-by-south, we perceive on a height a considerable village, called Beit-Dejan ; and on this side of it, on a lower hill, the village of Roujib.

The Book of Nehemiah (vii. 28), and that of Esdras (ii. 24), mention a locality called Azmout, which Reland supposes to have belonged to the tribe of Judah or to the tribe of Benjamin, because its inhabitants are spoken of along with those of Netopha, Gilgal, and Geba. The complete identity of the name might make us suppose that the Azmout of the Scriptures, erroneously transcribed Azmaveth, and the modern Azmout, were but one and the same place, if we did not read, at the same time, in Nehemiah (xii. 28, 29), that "The sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round

Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathe ; also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth ; for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem." Really, a village in the neighbourhood of Naplouse cannot be considered as built near Jerusalem. Let us then come to this conclusion, that we find here one example more of the frequent repetition of geographical names in the Bible, the same name being very often given to several different localities.

If we cannot assign positively to Azmout a biblical antiquity, we shall, I think, be more fortunate with respect to the next village, Beit-Dejan. It is identical with Beth-Dagon, where Saul's head was carried after he had perished on the mountain of Gilboa. In Joshua (xv. 41) we find mentioned a place called Beth-Dagon, belonging to the tribe of Judah : evidently this is not the same as ours. Joshua also mentions (xix. 27) another Beth-Dagon, belonging to the tribe of Asher ; neither is this our Beit-Dejan, since we are now on the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh (on this side of the Jordan) and of the tribe of Ephraim. We must therefore look elsewhere. In 1 Chronicles (x., verses 3rd and following) we read :—" And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith ; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not ; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died. So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together. And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw

that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in Mount Gilboa. And when they had stripped him, they took his head and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people. And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon."

The bodies of Saul and of his sons had been carried to Bethshan (the Beysan of the present day). The inhabitants of Jabesh, in the country of Gilead, came and carried them off during the night, and, having repassed the Jordan, buried them with funeral honours.

I am very much inclined to believe that the Beth-Dagon of the passage just quoted, is no other than our Beit-Dejan, because this village is indeed only one day's march from Djilboun, the locality in the mountain to the north-east of Djenin, which was unquestionably the scene of Saul's disaster. As to Roujib, if it is not a village of modern foundation, I do not know to what ancient locality it might be referred.

Nearly opposite Roujib, and on the right bank of the valley, is the village of Kafr-Kallin. About fourteen furlongs further on, and on the same side, is a hamlet of no great importance, called El-Makhna. May there not be in this name El-Makhna an alteration of the biblical name, incorrectly translated Michmethah (Josh. xvi. 6), which belongs to a locality placed like this, on the limit of Ephraim and Manasseh, and in the vicinity of Shechem (Josh. xvii. 7)?

Among the hills on the right, forming the continuation of the Gêrizim range, there is one with such a regular figure and so smooth and easy a declivity, that it is scarcely possible not to recognise in it the signs of human industry of a very ancient date. A league further on, two large villages are again situated, one on the right, the other on the left flank of the valley. These are Haouarah and A'ouarta. As we were proceeding as fast as possible, so as to reach Jerusalem and Bethlehem in proper time; and as, besides, we intended passing again by this road, I contented myself with merely noting the localities, without studying them with as much attention as I did on our return. For this reason, in another part of this work, I shall recur to the important ruins, which I did not observe the first time I travelled this way.

The village of Haouarah is in some sort the key of this fine opening, which leads directly into the vale of Shechem. It is built on a hillock of no great height, commanding the road; and the heaps of dirt and dung-hills which surround it, give it almost the look of a fortified village. A little beyond Haouarah, the valley is closed in to the south by rather a steep hill, over which ascends the road leading to Jerusalem; but as here the valley suddenly turns off to the west, it is still in that direction several thousand yards in breadth. Behind Haouarah, and at a very little distance, is the hamlet of Aijn-Ouris; and at the bottom of the valley, the village of Kousa, both easily distinguishable from the Jerusalem road.

For a moment we thought of halting half-way up the hill to breakfast. We were protected there from the southerly wind, which was still increasing, and a small

spring, unfortunately not abundant enough to water our horses, seemed to invite us to stop. But the morning was still early; and we knew by experience how much is gained in travelling, by marching as far as possible before breakfast: so we pushed on, after having decided not to halt before reaching the Khan-es-Saouijeh, where we were assured we should arrive in less than an hour, and find water sufficient for all our necessities.

The table-land, on the top of which we have arrived, is very stony and difficult of passage, but of no great length. Half an hour later we descend again, and pass through a pretty, well-cultivated dale, watered by a modest little rivulet. To the left, we leave on the declivity of the hill we have just passed, the village of Yitma,* and opposite to this village, on the hill facing it, the village of Koubalan. We climb again over a small range of low hills, and reach at last the long-wished-for khan. The Khan-es-Saouijeh is built on a very small plain; in front of it, and a few hundred yards to our right, some ruins are visible, which seem to belong to the Roman period.

We had hoped to arrive at a real khan; but we find only a mass of ruins. Four walls of large stones, half of them crumbled down,—such is the Khan of Saouijeh. We try to shelter ourselves behind its walls; our cook instals himself, and produces some hard-boiled eggs; add to these a half-starved fowl, mildewed bread, and wine which, from having been too much shaken, looks

* We read in the second book of Kings, xxi. 19, that the name of the mother of King Amon, son of Manasseh, was Meshullemeth, daughter of Haruz of Jotbah, without any other indication. I am much inclined to think that this biblical locality must be identified with the modern Yitma; for the sound of the *m* and *b* is too much alike to allow of any difference between the two names. Josephus gives to this same locality the name of Ἰαβάτη.

like mud, and our breakfast is before you. It may be readily supposed that such a feast was quickly despatched, and we were soon again in the saddle. A quarter of an hour later we cross another valley, commanded to the right by the village of Loubban, and at the bottom of which is an abundant spring, close to the ruins of an ancient khan, called Khan-el-Loubban. Maundrell was the first to recognise, in the village of Loubban, the Lebonah of the Scriptures. The village of Shiloh, according to the Bible (Judges xxi. 19), was northward of Beth-el, and southward of Lebonah. This description is quite exact; for Beitin, which has taken the place of Beth-el, is exactly south of Seiloun, which is to the south-east of Loubban.

To get out of the Ouad-el-Loubban, we begin climbing the mountains of Judæa, which we shall leave no more until we reach Jerusalem. Arrived at the summit, we discover to the left the village of Seiloun: this is Shiloh, the celebrated place where the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant were established. Josephus writes the name Σιλοῦν, precisely as its inhabitants pronounce it at this very day. It is now a poor village of no importance.

We next descend into a fertile valley, and perceive on the declivity opposite the two villages of Sendjil and Tourmous-Aya,* between which we pass. They are scarcely distant from each other more than a mile. At first, one might be tempted to find in Tourmous-Aya a very important biblical locality often mentioned in the holy Scriptures. I allude to Ai. But several very distinct texts forbid the identification: for instance, among

* Tourmous means a kind of pulse (Lupine).

others, in Genesis (xii. 8), we read that Beth-el was situated westward, and Ai eastward. This description cannot be made to tally in any way with the respective positions of Tourmous-Aya and Beitin; as the first of these two villages is nearly exactly north of the second, and about four leagues distant. Any assimilation, therefore, between Ai and Tourmous-Aya would be more than doubtful.

When we are nearly opposite Sendjil, the sun begins to decline, and we have not yet accomplished two-thirds of our day's march. Besides, the wind continues blowing, and we have it full in the face, which is very fatiguing. Half an hour later, we leave on our right the village of Ras-Abou-Kesh; then we pass between the two villages of Yebroud and Selouad, not far distant from each other; we move along the crest of the vale, in which are the cultivated grounds of Yebroud, and we descry from above a kind of well in front of the habitations, bearing the name of Ain-Yebroud. Descending next from the heights, we wind along the hill, on the side of which is built Selouad; and we enter a narrow pass, well wooded with olive trees, with a somewhat suspicious name, that of Ouad-el-Haramyeh, or the thieves' valley. The road here becomes very bad; some portions have been swept away by the rains, and we are obliged to be very careful lest we should break our horses' legs and our own.

In about an hour we arrive at some inconsiderable springs, dropping from the vertical rocks which line the right side of the valley; they form the Ain-el-Haramyeh. Here are two ruined cisterns of fine ancient workmanship, but without a single drop of water in either. They are, I think, of Roman construction, and close to the border

of the ancient road, which we have followed throughout the day.

Towards the southern extremity, after having passed the Ain-el-Haramyeh and the cisterns, the valley widens a little, and we discover right and left, but principally to the right, some fine sepulchral excavations, dating most certainly from a very ancient period. In outward appearance they resemble those of the necropolises we have already seen. Unfortunately, we have no leisure to examine them. Night is coming on rapidly, and we are still very far from El-Bireh.

The Ouad-el-Haramyeh opens abruptly into a much larger valley, planted with magnificent olive-trees, and leading to the village of El-Tayebeh. After having advanced some four or five hundred yards, we enter a new defile not quite so narrow as the Ouad-el-Haramyeh, but commanded by rocks admirably disposed for an ambuscade of the kind of gentry who have given their name to the country. This defile is in the same direction as the other one, and deeply hollowed, being the bed of a torrent now dry.

This bed of a torrent forms the high road; and a scrambling, sandy, difficult road it is, with this variation only, that the word sandy should often be changed into rocky. Whilst we are trying hard to scale it, rain comes on as a fresh comfort to reinforce the wind! A little rain will subdue a great wind, says the proverbial wisdom of nations; a gentle rain in this country is exceedingly like a heavy squall in France; but, fortunately, it soon passes over. Darkness is of longer duration; for night has closed in quite black, and the best we can do now is to give the rein to our horses, trusting to fortune and

their instinct. We can scarcely see two steps before us, and find it very difficult to keep together. When we have gained the summit of the pass, we move on as rapidly as we can, over flat and slippery rocks. There is no sign of vegetable earth.

As we proceed onwards, and whilst I am shivering in my great-coat, and endeavouring to screen myself as much as possible from the cutting wind, Mohammed informs us that we are opposite Beitin. Another half-hour wears away, and we find ourselves at last before a large stone shed, which proves to be one of the houses of El-Bireh.

Thank Heaven we have arrived at last! But we are worn out with cold, bruises, fatigue, and want of sleep. We have been on horseback twelve long hours, exposed to wind and rain, and might feel tired with less hardship. As soon as we have alighted we are introduced to our new resting-place. What a horrible den!—Imagine a muddy corridor, six feet long by three feet broad, without any light. Do they pretend to lodge us here? With the most accommodating disposition it would be perfectly impossible, unless we were made to lie in a heap. "Up-stairs, sir," says André, "please to go up." Go up! it is easily said; but how, and which way? Our dragoman then makes us feel in the dark three stones sticking out of the right-hand wall, in an oblique line, and three feet distant from each other. "This is the staircase," says he, Well; we are much obliged to you, and up we climb one after the other.

Arrived at the top of the wall, which we had taken for a simple partition, we find a barn-floor made of beaten clay, with the house-roof for ceiling; and such a

roof!—actual trellis work—through which the wind exercises its right of entry, as in all respectable Arab mansions. Another little platform in a corner, placed above, nearly as large as the corridor at the bottom of the staircase, and raised two feet above the level of our apartment, is used as a bed-room by the ladies of the house. They are squatting there with their lord and master, and two or three invited friends from the neighbourhood. One of these, a Christian of the village of Ram-Allah, possesses a pair of eyes which I shall never forget. Evidently they remain within the sockets merely from habit. Three immense jugs or chests of dried clay, serving either for clothes-presses or corn-bins, garnish the sides of the two rooms. We have just space enough to lay our beds side by side, the one encroaching upon the other. If there is not the shadow of a chair, there is at least a log of wood upon the fire, which makes a show of burning, but smokes enough to choke us all. A little iron lamp, thrust into a hole in the wall, completes the furniture.

It is half-past nine o'clock, so we may be permitted to be hungry, but it requires some time to cook our repast. It is quite impossible to lay out our beds at the same time with our table and canvas stools; and as long as our meal is undisposed of, we must be content to squat or stand as best we may, at our own preference. We prefer putting up and taking down alternately such portions of our furniture as may suit the wants of the moment. The canvas stools, the table, and two beds out of seven are arranged; the bales enclosing the remainder act as chairs in the meantime; and as we clearly understand it would be but knocking our heads against the wall to think of bettering

ourselves, we make up our minds to bear with what accommodation we have. We sit down anywhere, and smoke or sleep whilst our dinner is getting ready.

I take advantage of the opportunity to speak Arabic, presenting myself alone to the society of the ladies' *elevated* drawing-room, and the conversation begins. The man with the huge eyes asks me to teach him French : I give him a few words and phrases which he pronounces tolerably, after having been told three times, and an hour slips away in this manner before our long-expected dinner makes its appearance. Constantine, who begins to have some misgivings as to our good humour, has concocted for us even worse poisons than usual, and it is near midnight before we can scramble into our beds, passing over each other's bodies, at the risk of disarranging all our furniture. Weariness is a fine specific for a good night's rest. We are eaten up with vermin, and notwithstanding, until daylight returns, not one of us has moved a limb from the position in which he has fallen asleep !

December 23rd.

The day arrives at last on which we expect to reach Jerusalem. We are all up with the dawn ; the Abbé runs to visit the ruins of a Christian church of the period of the Crusades, and I hasten to examine some ancient cisterns which have certainly given their name to the village, El-Bireh. It is the Beeroth of the Bible, a town of the Gibeonites (Joshua ix. 17), which became afterwards one of the cities of the tribe of Benjamin (2 Samuel iv. 2). And so indeed, St. Jerome tells us in the Onomasticon. "Beeroth sub colle Gabaon, ostenditur hodieque villa ab Æliâ pergentibus Neapolim in septimo lapide." As to this hill of Gabaon, it is (according to St. Jerome's

statement) near Rama, and there is really now on the spot a village called Djeba. Is it the ancient capital of the Gibeonites, the Gibeah of the Book of Judges (xix. 13.), called also Gibbethon in the Book of Joshua (xxi. 23.)? Since St. Jerome, who was so perfectly well acquainted with all the Holy Land, places Gabaon near Rama, it seems to me there can be no doubt as to this identity.

The map of Syria by Zimmermann places a village called El-Djib at the distance of a league to the west of Khouraib-er-Ram, and he recognises in it the Gibeon of the Scriptures, which he distinguishes from Gibeah. I know not whether this village of El-Djib really exists, but at all events, in accordance with St. Jerome, I prefer looking for the metropolis of the Gibeonites on the site of Djeba.

Our readers will remember the deceit which the Gibeonites made use of to avoid the terrible consequences of the Judaic conquest (Joshua ix). The inhabitants of Jericho and Ai had just been exterminated; all the generation of the Canaanites was threatened with the same fate. The Gibeonites, belonging to that race, concocted a stratagem to get out of this cruel dilemma. Messengers chosen from among the inhabitants of Gibeon, Beeroth, Chephirah and Kirjathjearim, came and presented themselves to Joshua. "We are not Canaanites," they said; "and we reside so far from this place that our clothes and our shoes are worn out with the journey. See in what a state they are; they were new when we left our own country. Look at our bread; it is dry and mouldy; it was fresh when we brought it from home. We come to offer you the alliance of our people who have nothing in common with the Canaanites. Give us your

friendship in return for ours!" Joshua (who probably was not very well acquainted with the topography of the country he was sent to conquer), and the high-priest Eleazar, allowed themselves to be deceived by this audacious fraud, so like the arts of the Bedouins. The treaty of alliance was made and sworn to, and the Gibeonites were spared for the time being. They were even saved shortly afterwards by Joshua from the attack which the king of Jerusalem and the other kings of the neighbourhood made upon them, as a punishment for having entered into a treaty with the common enemy. Joshua, having been summoned to the assistance of his new allies, fell suddenly upon the kings of Canaan, routed them and pursued them sword in hand, through the valleys as far as Bethora,* according to Josephus (Ant. Jud. v. 1—17. At a later period, Saul, notwithstanding the plighted faith, ravaged the country of the Gibeonites, and caused them such ruin, that David, to obey the prophets who threatened him with the vengeance of the Almighty, if he did not give satisfaction to the nation which Saul had treacherously attacked, was obliged to surrender seven men of Saul's family, required by the Gibeonites to be placed at their mercy. The seven unfortunate victims were delivered over to them and put to death accordingly.

After my short morning's walk, I return to the khan, and find everybody ready to start. According to our daily custom, before mounting our horses, we take a basin of soup and a cup of coffee, after which we smoke a chibouk. The unlucky Constantine, who begins to look on us with perfect disgust (which we amply return whenever we think of his cookery), hands us some coffee flavoured with oil.

* Beth-horon (Josh. x. 10).

We are not accustomed to this whimsical beverage, and compel him to change his mixture; but the second is still more oily than the first, and one of our cups is unceremoniously emptied into the face of the contumacious cook, who begins to suspect from this moment that his situation of purveyor-general is beginning to totter. This time we go without coffee, and resume our march.

Before us, mounted on a jackass, is a fat man in European costume, who since yesterday keeps as near as possible to our caravan. We are told he is an inhabitant of the Tiberiad, going to Jerusalem on private business. We encountered him again some time after, and exchanged agreeable intercourse, which I shall mention in the proper place.

On leaving El-Bireh, the road descends through fertile lands and enters into a narrow valley bounded by rocks, called the Ouad-Atara. Some ancient ruins are visible at the entrance and the egress of this defile, resembling fortified posts erected to defend the pass. This time again there is no mistaking the identity. The modern name Atara has taken the place of the biblical name, Ataroth, one of the stations on the southern frontier of the tribe of Ephraim, close to the territory of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xvi. 5, 7; xviii. 13; and xxi. 18).

The Ouad-Atara is not much more than two thousand yards in length; on emerging from it we leave to our right the village of Rafat; then, on a summit further off, and separated from the first by another mountain, is a Mussulman oualy, called Nebbi-Samouïl. I do not know to what biblical locality Rafat may have succeeded. From this spot the ancient paved road is recognisable by

most evident signs, which continue to show themselves all the way to Jerusalem.

We soon reach the place called Er-Ram. This is a small hill, on the summit of which are some shapeless ruins. On the site of this hill, along the old road, the rocks present numerous marks of ancient constructions, such as square areas and stairs. A little further on, and to the right of the road, are other ruins evidently of a more modern origin, and among them may be easily distinguished, by some remains of pointed arches, a large structure of the middle ages. Is it the castle of the *Sires de Rames*? is it an Arab khan?—this is very difficult to decide. One thing is certain, that this structure bears the very significant name of Khouraib-er-Ram (the little ruin of Er-Ram). Ramah was a town of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 25), and we read in Judges (xix. 13), "Let us draw near to one of these places, to lodge all night in Gibeah or in Ramah." The hill of Er-Ram is most certainly the site of the biblical Ramah, and the village of Djeba is close at hand. The scriptural text which I have just quoted is then quite clear by itself.

Proceeding on our march we leave, distant about fourteen furlongs to our right, the village of Beit-Hanoun, opposite to which, to our left, and only a few hundred yards distant from our road, is a regular mound of no great extent covered with ancient rubbish: it is called Tel-el-Foul (the hillock of the bean).

From this spot we discover afar off, on an eminence to the right, the village of Beit-Hour-el-Fougah. Westward of this I am told by Mohammed there is a second village called Beit-Hour-et-Tattah. It would be difficult

not to recognise in these two villages the two biblical towns of Beth-horon, the one called the upper, the other the lower, which were on the confines of the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin (Josh. xvi. 5 ; 1 Chron. vii. 24 ; and 2 Chron. xxv. 13). Beth-horon (Josh. xxi. 22) was given to the Levites. I consider it extremely probable that the locality called by Josephus, Bethora (Βαιθωρα), and up to which Joshua pursued the Canaanite kings who had attacked the Gibeonites, is no other than our Beit-Hour-et-Tattah.

After having passed in front of the village of Kalounyeh, visible to our right, we arrive at the foot of a hillock on which stands the village of Schafat. This village has the appearance of a castle of the middle ages with a square keep. We pay little attention to it, as our minds are otherwise employed. In our front, beyond some hills of no great height, a plain spreads out covered with olive trees, and from this grove of olive trees rise majestically the domes and minarets of Jerusalem. In an instant our tarboushes are lifted from our foreheads, and every one of us salutes the holy city. A cry of joy and admiration bursts from our hearts, and a deep sentiment of emotion pervades the whole party.

From this point our march considerably quickened. and we passed rapidly the walls of El-Qods. But I must delay a moment to say a few words of this village of Schafat.

Alexander had taken Tyre after a seven months' siege. Gaza, after resisting for two months the Macedonian hero, fell in turn before his victorious arms. From Gaza, Alexander determined to march on Jerusalem. The high-priest, Jaddus, on hearing this terrible news, orders

public prayers to be offered up, to avert the ruin impending over the city of David. During the night the Lord appears to him in a dream, tells him to banish all fear, to open the city gates and to proceed to meet Alexander with all the pomp of religious ceremony. The pontiff taking courage again, hastens to obey the commands of God, and when he hears that the Macedonian army is drawing near the city, he goes forth with the gorgeous retinue which he has marshalled in order, and advances as far as the place called Sapha. This word translated into Greek, Σκοπή, means an eminence, "a place from which one may see at a distance," as Josephus adds; from this point Jerusalem and the Temple are distinctly visible.

The Phœnicians and Chaldeans who formed a portion of Alexander's army, were already rejoicing in imagination at the sack of the town and the death of the high-priest. But it pleased God to disappoint their hopes: for Alexander perceiving from a distance this multitude of men in white robes, headed by their priests in linen tunics, and by the high-priest with a violet gown embroidered with gold, and wearing on his head the pontifical tiara, ornamented with the golden plate, upon which was engraved the name of Jehovah,—Alexander halted his army, advanced alone to meet the procession, adored the holy name of the Most High, and was the first to bend the knee before the pontiff. Then all the people of Jerusalem surrounded Alexander and shouted forth his praise with one voice; and the kings and generals who followed him thought that he was stricken with madness, when they saw him accept this homage with a satisfied and courteous demeanour.

Parmenio was the only one who ventured to question his master, and to ask him how he could have thought of bowing himself down before the high-priest of the Jews. Alexander answered that he had not adored the man, but the God, whose minister he was; that he had recognised in him a mysterious being who had appeared to him in a dream and promised him that he should achieve the conquest of all Asia, overthrowing the empire of Darius; and that in consequence he could no longer doubt the triumph of his arms. Taking the pontiff by the hand, Alexander walked towards Jerusalem, went to the temple and offered there a sacrifice according to the Judaic rites. The next day Alexander convoked the high-priest and the people, and asked them what boon they wished to obtain from him. Jaddus replied that they only wished for permission to preserve the customs of their fathers, and to be exempt from tribute every seventh year. Both these demands were granted. Shortly afterwards Alexander went away from Jerusalem, taking along with him a number of Jews who had enlisted in his army, to march against the Persians. (Joseph. Ant. Jud. xi., viii. 5.)

The place of the meeting between Alexander and the high-priest Jaddus, is the very spot where we halted to salute for the first time the city of the Lord. Now, as in days of yore, Schafat means an eminence, a place from which one may see at a distance; and this designation is as correct at the present day, as it was twenty-two centuries ago.*

* In Arabic شاف (shâf) means to see, and شعفة (shafat) summit of a hill. In Hebrew the corresponding word means, *locus eminens, collis planus.* But what is rather curious, is to find the two Greek words Σκοπεύω and Σκοπή in the same correlation with each other as the two Arabic words above-mentioned.

Before noon we had passed through the plain, well planted with olive trees, which lay between us and the walls of Jerusalem. Following the stony road which leads from the last hills to the Bab-el-A'amoud, or Bab-es-Cham, that is to the gate leading to Damascus, and leaving to our left the tombs of the Kings, we had at last reached this gate. But instead of passing immediately through it, our moukris led us all along the whole line of walls from the Bab-es-Cham to the Bab-el-Khalil or Hebron gate. So by this last-named entrance, passing before David's tower, and the castle of the Pisans, we finally entered Jerusalem.*

Some friends had recommended to us the Hotel of Palmyra, kept by Stefano Bari. As it is situated near the Damascus gate, we proceeded there at once, and found we had to pass again through the streets the whole distance which we had already traversed to no purpose. On reaching the hotel we find the host absent on a journey, his wife sick, and no lodgings at our disposal. Luckily the factotum of another inn, kept by an Englishman, named Meshulam, comes running to us, and entreats us to alight at his master's house. As we were quite at a loss what to do, we thought ourselves fortunate in this unlooked-for rencontre. Besides, the house is not far from the French consulate, where, of course, we shall often have occasion to go. Everything appears for the best, and half-an-hour afterwards we were duly installed in our new quarters.

Let me now mention the first impression which

* It appears that people are allowed to ride out by the Damascus gate; but to ride in they must choose the Hebron entrance; this is owing to some quarantine formalities.

Jerusalem produced upon me. The walls built by the Turks are of a very imposing but melancholy aspect. The streets are narrow, filthy and loathsome, as they are in all oriental towns; the vaulted roofs which usually cover them over produce in these narrow passages a dampness and a stench exceedingly disagreeable; and lastly, the pavement is dreadfully out of order, so that people run the risk at every step of breaking their horses' legs or their own necks. So much for the physical impression. As to the moral effect, that is quite a different affair: we are in Jerusalem. Everything is comprised in that word.

As soon as we are established at Mr. Meshulam's, where we encounter Mr. Gustavus de Rothschild (who has just travelled all through Syria proper, and with whom Edward renews an acquaintance which began in their childhood), I run to visit our consul. Our consul is M. Botta, the same who had the good fortune to discover the wonderful ruins of Nineveh, M. Botta my fellow member in the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, M. Botta whom I love with all my heart, and who, I hope, returns a little of that attachment. We fall upon each other's neck. In five minutes we speak of France, our common friends, politics, antiquities, travels, every subject that comes uppermost. On both sides it is a perfect hailstorm of questions and answers.

I inquired if any letters had arrived for us. But we must have patience; the Beyrout steamer is detained at Alexandria from some accident to her engine, and our despatches have been delayed in consequence. M. Botta, who had expected us, invites Edward and myself to dine

with him that very day in company with M. Pizzamano, the Austrian consul, and another consul who is about to leave Jerusalem. As it is scarcely proper to be presented to consuls in the outré costume we have adopted for the convenience of travelling, and as I have not yet changed my clothes, in my anxiety to shake hands with M. Botta, I hasten back to the inn to rummage my portmanteau for something of a suit that may give me the appearance of a human being for an evening of half-a-dozen hours.

The weather has been beautiful all day. My son, Edward, and I, are lodged in a room opening on a terrace. From this terrace we may study the panorama of Jerusalem. To our right is the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; before us the Mosque of Omar, and beyond it the Mount of Olives, behind which, towards the horizon, we discover the mountains rising over the Dead Sea. To our left the ground ascends in an inclined plane up to the walls of the city, which completely shut out the view of the country in this direction. Cupolas and gray walls everywhere, heads of palm trees here and there, some domes, and a very few minarets; such is the general aspect of Jerusalem.

Before going to the consulate, I have a small reckoning to settle with Mr. Constantine. We have unanimously condemned him, and in my capacity of leader of the party, I must of course execute the sentence. I therefore assemble my travelling companions, and summon the ex-cook to our presence. "Constantine," I begin, "go and fetch me your agreement, I want to examine it." If the dome of the Mosque of Omar had suddenly fallen upon his head, I do not believe the rogue would have

been more disagreeably astonished. A Greek does not easily give up the hope of continuing to prey upon his fellow-creatures; and Constantine, without exactly knowing what is going to take place, would most willingly bargain for a savage reprimand, on condition that he might retain his fee of three guineas a day. He takes some time in finding the agreement, which he always carries in his pocket, but which he pretends to go and fetch from his room, to gain time to collect himself. At last I obtain the paper, read aloud the contents, and then address him: "I cannot find," say I, "that it has been stipulated as part of your service that you should steal for your kitchen such utensils and such provisions as you might require. You have robbed the convent of St. Jean d'Acre; you have robbed the convent of Nazareth; you rob everywhere. You are a consummate villain, and we dismiss you from our service. Here is your agreement;" and tearing the paper into pieces, I fling them in his face. "But before you go, you shall deliver to André everything you have stolen. If, in a quarter of an hour all is not given up, as I have procured for you a passport which places you under French law, I will deliver you over to the French consul, and you may get out of his hands as you can. Lastly, I warn you to do what you are told, with a good grace, otherwise you may receive a sound thrashing to stimulate your honesty. So now, be off, wretch, and make haste: we give you a quarter of an hour to obey the orders you have just received."

I knew quite well that it would take longer than that for our man to disgorge what, as a good Greek, he considered his legitimate property as soon as he had laid his fingers

on it; but we actually succeeded in the end in extracting from his luggage, to his infinite sorrow, all the stolen articles. And that being done, we left him to look out for another berth elsewhere.

It remained still to decide what we were to do with his *alter ego*, the Macedonian Nicholas. This fellow, an habitual drunkard, but tolerably honest in the main, had helped not a little to enlighten us on the infamies of his chief; he was therefore as expeditiously dismissed by Constantine, as the rogue himself had been by us. Constantine would have greatly relished giving him a little manual punishment; but as Nicholas was the stronger of the two, the attempt might have proved detrimental to the physiognomy of the *ex maitre d'hôtel*, a consideration which checked his ire. The respectable Constantine never condescended to laugh, but he greatly valued his personal appearance, dressed with the utmost care, and buckled himself in his girdle as tightly as any beauty in her bodice. Nicholas came to us in despair, demanding how he was to get home again. From Jerusalem to Macedonia the road is interesting, but the distance is long; and if the traveller is without a piastre in his pocket, he runs great risk of breaking down on the way. So we took pity on the poor devil, and retained him in our service.

These little domestic affairs being settled, we proceeded to the consulate, where we were much delighted to sit down again to a real table, and a regular Parisian dinner. Genuine cordiality and unforced mirth are also desirable additions to any repast. After dinner, pipes were brought in, and whilst we were inhaling the perfumes of Djebely, M. Barbier, an amiable young gentleman,

attached to the consulate in the capacity of interpreter, and acting for the time as chancellor, sat down to a magnificent grand piano of Erard's, and entertained us with choice music selected from Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, and Bach. Taking in turn my station at the instrument, I gave him, awkwardly enough, but with resemblance that could be guessed at, the splendid andante of the symphony in A. "Are you fond of old music, and of this style?" asked M. Botta. "It is the only kind I like," replied I. "Good!" he exclaimed; "here's a man at last with whom I can talk—the first I have seen in Jerusalem." "You may say the three first," answered I, "for here is Edward, who dotes on the 'Conservatoire' as much as I do, and Belly, whose head is crammed with *fugues*." A meeting of freemasons is less cordially sympathetic than a convocation of five enthusiasts in music, who believe in the pre-eminence of the old masters.

The party breaks up at half-past ten. Two kaouas of the consulate, armed with lanterns and long canes, resembling those of our drum-majors, which they strike violently against the pavement until they sound again, conduct us back to our inn. A vaulted passage leads from the lane in which the French consul resides to the main street of Jerusalem, which crosses the city from one end to the other. Under this vault we observe, for the first time, a negro squatting on a stone bench, with a small chafing-dish between his legs. Every evening we find him there at the same place. He is the watchman of that quarter, and passes the night on this bench, as we are told, three hundred and sixty-five times per annum, and three hundred and sixty-six times in every leap-year. Let our national guard, after this, complain of

an occasional watch, and the hardship of a camp bed. On summing up the events of the day, we find ourselves in Jerusalem, and have looked on the faces of friends and countrymen. The entry ought to be made in our diary with a rose-coloured pencil.

CHAPTER IV.

Bethlehem on the Eve of the Nativity.—Beautiful women.—Latin and Greek churches.—The Scheikh Hamdan.—The tribe of Thaamerahs.—Departure for the Dead Sea.—A painful separation.—First glimpse of the Dead Sea.—Monastery of Mar-Saba.—The Essenians.—The escort increased.—The line of march.—Banks of the Kedron.—Volcanic evidences.—The shores of the Dead Sea.—First encampment.—Plants and flowers.

December 24th.

In spite of the mosquitoes we have passed a refreshing night in a comfortable bed. We are delighted to have arrived in time for Christmas Eve, and prepare to proceed to Bethlehem. As it is quite understood here that all travellers are pilgrims, and that all pilgrims intend visiting Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, the Bedouins, who hire themselves as guides, are always on the look out for new arrivals, and hasten to offer their services. About one o'clock, an important personage, with a good spice of the gallows in his look and manners, comes to propose to us his protection for the above-named tour. As we think to make better arrangements than those of ordinary tourists, I stand on the reserve, the more so as Mohammed, who is perfectly well acquainted with all these gentry, winks at me in a very significant manner, whilst he returns the salaam of the new comer. I therefore decline entering into an engagement with the Scheikh, to whom I announce formally that I treat with no one except through the French consul.

By half-past two our horses are brought to the door of the inn, when we mount and commence our journey. The weather continues splendid; the sun warms us most agreeably, and we get over the two short leagues separating us from Bethlehem, with many capricious deviations; I mean galloping at random, just as Parisian loungers do at Montmorency.

On leaving Jerusalem, we descend first into the valley of Hinnom, crossing it at its commencement; we pass, on the left, the Birket-es-Soulthan, a splendid cistern hollowed in the rock by the kings of Judah; and on the right, some rocks, amongst which we descry numerous sepulchral caves. A little further on, upon the level ground, we tread the site of the ancient hamlet called, by Josephus, Ἐρεβίνθων οἶκος. This flat, which extends all the way from Jerusalem to the Greek monastery called Mar-Elias, is the spot where Pompey pitched his camp, when he came to wage war against Aristobulus, and to restore the pontificate to Hyrcanus, son of Alexander Jannæus. A little before we reach the convent gate, a well stands right in the middle of the road; it is the Bir-en-Nedjur (or well of the star). Tradition relates that the miraculous star which appeared on the night of the Nativity, stopped over this very place.

The buildings of the Convent of Mar-Elias are in a wretched state, and resemble a fortress much more than a place consecrated to religious purposes. From hence the road hollows down into a deep ravine, planted with meagre olive trees, and traversed by a path cut out of the rock. On the opposite side of this ravine the flat range re-appears again, following and commanding all the windings of the valley. On this track, and to the right, we encounter the

ruins of an ancient aqueduct, which is supposed (correctly, I have no doubt) to have been constructed by the kings of Judah. In front of the ruins of this aqueduct (which is little more than a canal covered over by large blocks of stone bound together), we come to a Mussulman oualy (chapel), held in great veneration by all the inhabitants of the country, whether Christians, Mahommedans, or Jews. It is the tomb of Rachel.

We read in Genesis that Rachel died on the road to Bethlehem, in giving birth to Benjamin (Gen. xxxv. 19 and 20), "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." "20. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." In a country like this, tradition is entitled to every respect, and I have not the least doubt that this is really the place where the patriarch's wife was buried.

A little further on, we leave to our left some ancient cisterns, known by the name of David's wells. At this point the road, to round the valley in which Bethlehem stands, turns off at an angle, and thus suddenly takes us in front of the first buildings of the holy city. From this spot the aspect of Bethlehem is really delightful. It is an extensive village, with houses grouped together in the most picturesque manner, and at its eastern extremity appear the imposing masses of the church and convent. In front of Bethlehem, a large, well-cultivated valley opens, with plantations of olive and fig trees arranged in terraces.

Nothing can be more extraordinary than Bethlehem at the moment of our arrival. Christians from all the countries of the East are there congregated. Arabs, Greeks,

Armenians, Copts, and Abyssinians swarm in the streets: all are dressed in festival habits; and, whilst waiting for the ceremony of the night, each group of pilgrims kills the sheep which is to form the foundation of their evening meal. Our horses literally flounder through the blood spilt on all sides by these extemporaneous butchers. The open yard in front of the monastery is crowded with pilgrims, to whom the Bethlehemites sell chaplets, crosses, and small pictures carved in olive wood or mother-of-pearl.

We alight at the convent gate, in front of the burying-ground, in which are interred the Franciscan fathers who die at Bethlehem. A small door, four feet and a half in height, admits into the monastery the pilgrims who come to claim its hospitality. This door is closed behind them, and they then find themselves in large corridors, where crowds of Christian Arabs are constantly circulating. We are, as usual, cordially welcomed; rooms are assigned to our exclusive use, and we become members of the establishment for four-and-twenty hours.

As we have arrived early, we take advantage of the remaining portion of the day to ramble in the neighbourhood. Service is going on; we cannot therefore at present visit the sanctuaries, which we must reserve for our return. As we leave the convent, we pass entirely through the town, and at a fountain, surrounded by a group of the prettiest women imaginable, we make an abundant collection of insects. When, at the close of day, we retrace our steps, other women have succeeded the former ones at the fountain, equally attractive and elegantly attired. The women of Bethlehem are celebrated throughout Syria for their remarkable beauty and graceful

bearing. I can safely affirm that this reputation is well deserved.

We find, on returning to the convent, one of our fellow-passengers of the steamer, Count Fadini, a young Milanese nobleman of great distinction; M. Pizzamano, and the two attachés of the French consulate; besides two other Frenchmen, with whom we travelled from Constantinople to Beyrout. We form altogether a numerous company, and no doubt the evening will pass agreeably.

Whilst they are preparing the dinner provided by the convent, we visit the holy places. One of the fathers, a Belgian by birth, obligingly offers to act as our guide. The Latin church and the Greek church—this last being no other than the one built by the Empress Helena—are very different from each other. The first named is small and unadorned; the latter is too much ornamented with pictures, mosaic work, and tinsel. Am I influenced by sectarian prejudice? I scarcely know; but I prefer the simplicity of our little Latin chapel to the splendour of the Greek sanctuary.

We then go down into the vaults. First, are the chambers of St. Jerome and St. Paul; then the apartment occupied by St. Joseph during the Virgin's delivery; and lastly, the room of the manger where our Saviour was born. Here, as at the Holy Sepulchre, the Greeks, much richer than the Latins, have succeeded in becoming possessors of the most valuable relics. We were shown a carved opening in the pavement, which formerly contained a massive silver star, that had been inlaid there in memory of the miraculous star which led the Magi and the shepherds to the cradle of the Messiah. We are told that the Greeks have carried it off. I doubt the fact, though I

cannot refute it. I can only affirm that the pavement is at the present day unadorned by any precious metal.

After this interesting visit we ascend again to the convent, where we are conducted immediately to the refectory. The repast provided for us is strictly meagre, without quibble. Peppered soup, fish with peppered sauce, fish without any sauce at all, but peppered still; and lastly, dry figs and coffee: such is the convent fare. We should most gladly compound for the same, and offered with similar good-will, throughout our journey. After dinner we assemble in my room to smoke a chibouk and sip our coffee. As we were to get up again at half-past eleven o'clock, to be present at the night service, we went to bed very early.

It would be quite superfluous in me to detail this touching ceremony, so often related by pilgrims who, like ourselves, have happened to be in Bethlehem during this solemn night. By four o'clock in the morning we had again returned to our apartments.

From December 25th to January 5th.

This morning, by six o'clock, we were already up to assist at the mass, which was to be performed expressly for us by the Abbé Michon, our kind and worthy fellow-traveller. He had seized this opportunity for a discourse on the great event which took place eighteen hundred and fifty-one years before our arrival, on the very spot where he was speaking. I need not say that he found touching language adapted to such a theme, and that he succeeded in renewing in our bosoms the emotion we had felt for the first time at Nazareth.

The good fathers will not allow us to depart until we

have shared the abstemious breakfast which they offer us. We are thus compelled to tarry at the convent a little longer than we should have preferred. We employed two hours in purchasing a quantity of those little pious remembrances, made up at Bethlehem, which are so popular in France. We chat with the Arab Christians, who are crowding into all the corridors of the convent. Among them there is a Scheikh, who pretends also to be Scheikh of Er-Riha, and makes us the same offer of his services as his predecessor we have named before. We decline engagements with him as with the other, his countenance being scarcely more prepossessing. He is on the whole as fine a figure for a brigand as could be well imagined.

By half-past ten we leave the convent and return to Jerusalem, riding as briskly as on the preceding day. As soon as we reach our inn, we hasten to take a second breakfast, and then proceed to examine in order all the sacred and profane monuments in the scriptural city. Of course, our first visit was to the Holy Sepulchre.

As all I could say would be but a mere repetition of the minute descriptions which may be read elsewhere of the Christian monuments contained in that venerable church, and as I must expect that, after the eminent writers who have devoted so many glowing pages to the subject, my simple narrative could not but appear weak and colourless, I prefer to leave the subject altogether untouched. Besides, the Abbé Michon has undertaken the history of Christian Jerusalem, and I cannot do better than leave the task to him, in the full confidence that it will be nobly executed.

The ancient monuments which abound in Jerusalem require to be studied with the most scrupulous attention, and to be examined again and again. The reader must,

then, allow me to put off, until I arrive at the narrative of my second sojourn in that city, all the observations I have been able to collect. I shall thus not be obliged to divide the results of my researches, and the reader will escape the tediousness of a twice-told explanation, and the annoyance of having constantly to recur from one volume to the other to compare my observations on any given monument. Just now, then, I will only say that I endeavoured to see everything before my departure for the Dead Sea, because it did not seem to me quite evident that we were sure to return hearty and healthy from this adventurous expedition. From the day of my arrival in Jerusalem I had acquainted M. Botta with my desire to accomplish the journey by land round the asphaltic lake. Although the undertaking did not appear to him an easy one, he saw nothing in it that was impossible. I was delighted to find him of this opinion, and begged of him to introduce me as soon as possible to some influential Scheikh, who might provide me with an escort, and serve as a guide during the whole expedition.

On the 27th of December, early in the morning, I was summoned to the consulate, and there I met with a fine old man, whose noble and intelligent face was often lighted up by a benevolent smile, which immediately engaged my confidence. This man was Hamdan, Scheikh of the Thaamerah, a tribe which, after having lived many years in a social village, one fine morning took to the Bedouin's wandering life again, never more to abandon it. I explained to Hamdan the plan of my intended journey. He assured me at once that all I proposed might certainly be accomplished; and that he would undertake to conduct and bring us back again in safety. He stipulated only

that he must take with him a certain number of his tribe to afford us, in case of need, a sufficient protection. Three mounted and five on foot he considered a sufficient escort. The horsemen were to be paid twenty piastres a day, the infantry only fifteen. For himself, he would be content with such *bakhshish* as we might choose to present him on our return. We gave him to understand that he might depend upon a thousand piastres; and he appeared to be quite satisfied with this promise.

Nothing remained now but to fix the time of our departure. I begged of Hamdan to come again in a few days, when I should be able to tell him the precise moment when we might leave Jerusalem; and we parted on mutual terms of good understanding. Before allowing him to take his leave, I asked our brave Scheikh what kind of presents we ought to carry with us, with a view of gratifying such of his colleagues as we might meet on our way, and of securing their friendship. The list of articles was made out as follows:—

Black abayas (cloaks)	6 or 7
White do. (zeraki)	6
Pairs of red boots	12
Arabian kafieh (turbans)	20
Tobacco for smoking	10 oques.
Lulehs or bowls of tobacco-pipes	100
Powder	5 oques.
Small shot	10 pounds.
Needles for sewing	500

We thought with such a store that we had enough to civilise all Arabia Petræa. Pleasant, but short-lived illusion!

Gustavus de Rothschild, who had been preparing to cross the desert into Egypt, allowed himself to be

seduced by the idea of a journey of discovery, such as ours promised to be. We were delighted when he offered to join us. This addition increased our caravan by three more persons: himself, then his dragoman, Francis Dzaloglon, a powerful, intelligent man, entirely devoted to his master, and a Nubian, called Selim, perhaps the most amusing creature to be found in all the East. Active, faithful, greedy, lazy, stupid, and cunning at the same time, Selim is the very image of Pierrot, with this difference, that instead of having his face whitened with flour, he has it blackened with charcoal.

Francis and André undertook to hunt the bazaars to make our purchases; and as we could not in conscience cook our own food, we begged of them to find out a successor to Constantine. The very same day we concluded a bargain with an honest fellow, called in Italian, Matteo by the Franks, and Matthya by the Arabs. This man is a Christian of Jerusalem, well versed in the mysteries of Syrian cookery; that is, he knows how to prepare hard-boiled eggs, to scald or roast a fowl, and to divide it with his fingers, to fricassee mutton in three or four different ways, to make coffee, and to light chibouks. Besides all these accomplishments, he is acquainted with the country, speaks a little French and Italian, a fair quantity of correct Arabic, and as much of the incomprehensible jargon of the wandering tribes.

We entrusted Matteo with the purchase of our provisions for the journey. As André had secretly reserved to himself the little peculations usually levied by all dragomen on stores laid in for their employers,

we saw that hostilities would soon be declared between the two conflicting powers, in consequence of a mutual love for the same piastres. To check this lowering cloud at once, we commanded André to abstain henceforth from any purchase, unless he received positive orders to that effect.

Little by little all our preparations were completed. But the weather had become uncomfortably rainy, and we were obliged to wait a few days longer, until the sun chose to make his appearance, before we ventured on a start. Whilst we were preparing for the campaign of Arabia, my son, weakened by fever, was anxious to return to France. I had decided that André should accompany him back to Beyrout. But I had not sufficiently relied upon the friendship and devotedness of the excellent Abbé. He never would consent to let my son go back alone, in the weak state to which he was reduced; and, though it was a very great sacrifice for himself to give up the journey round the Dead Sea, he determined upon returning to Beyrout, whence he would retrace his steps as fast as possible to Jerusalem, so as to continue with us the examination of Syria. I accepted his friendly offer with the deepest gratitude; and everything being thus settled, we agreed that on the 5th of January, whatever might be the weather, we should turn our faces towards the Dead Sea. On the day following our departure my son was to leave Jerusalem in another direction, so as to arrive at Beyrout in time for the steamer appointed to sail on the 16th.

We waited patiently enough the arrival of the expected day; employed in searching every corner of Jerusalem inside and outside the walls, in taking drawings and

plans, and in looking for plants and insects. We added something else, but the experiment to which we had recourse for passing our time, turned out so utterly disagreeable, that I may safely say not one of us will ever be tempted to try it again. I am speaking of the *hachich*, an abominable poison, which the dregs of the population alone drink and smoke in the East, and which we were silly enough to take in too large a dose on the eve of New Year's day. We fancied we were going to have an evening of enjoyment, but we nearly died through our imprudence. As I had taken a larger dose of this pernicious drug than my companions, I remained almost insensible for more than twenty-four hours, after which I found myself completely broken down, with nervous spasms, and incoherent dreams, which seemed to have endured a hundred years at least.

January 5th.

I was yesterday so awkward as to get a fall in returning home from M. Botta's. It was not raining; but, as the Jerusalem mud seldom gets dry at this season, you must keep close to the heels of the kaouas unless you choose to do as I did. I ran my foot against a stone, and fell down heavily at full length, severely injuring my right knee. Two large pieces of English sticking-plaster have admirably repaired the damage, by stanching the blood. This morning my leg is as stiff as a poker; but I do not want to use it at present, and the additional fatigue will fall more on my horse than on myself.

At a quarter-past three our entire equipage is at the gate; and, as we intend sleeping at the convent in Bethlehem, we send on Matteo with the luggage to Mar-Saba, where we propose to join him to-morrow.

M. Botta accompanies us, with my son and the Abbé. We are off at last! Shall we ever see Jerusalem again? *Allah âalem!* Allah only knows, say the Arabs, and so we think too, if we do not utter it. In fact, we are not the only people who feel anxious about this journey: every one, excepting our brave consul and the Bedouins, considers our undertaking as rash in the extreme; our servants and moukris, who understand that they are in for a share of the dangers we are likely to run, are somewhat downcast, and some of them are crying. Is it through fright, or from regret at leaving so agreeable a sojourn as Jerusalem? I cannot say; but at any rate our starting is anything but joyful. We are off! Now the die is cast, and we must be prepared for every chance that happens.

The Scheikh Hamdan, mounted on a noble gray mare, rides foremost, flanked by two gallant cavaliers, Meidany and El-Khatib. The last is thus named from his functions, which consists in repeating the *Khotbah*, or Friday prayer, before his brethren of the tribe. Then follow our five foot-guards, strong, well-made, and active, leaping like goats from one side of the road to the other. They are all armed with long guns or matchlocks, swords, and yataghans. Hamdan is the only one who carries pistols and a powder-flask slung across his green robe, over which he wears a cloak of brown and white stripes. A yellow and red kafieh forms a turban, which sets off admirably his fine countenance. Meidany has rather a sinister look, though he is really a very good sort of fellow; and so is the Khatib, who has much more the appearance of a brigand than of an Iman.

Among them there is one clothed only in a long black

robe, with a small sheepskin cloak over his shoulders, much worn out, and with the hair outside. This is Ahouad, the Scheikh Hamdan's nephew, the most devoted, obliging, and indefatigable of our escort. We soon become sworn friends, and he scarcely ever leaves my horse's side.

We then follow, helter-skelter, with Mohammed, who, whenever he can find a piece of even ground without mud, begins capering and curvetting, and loses his turban every time. I could not make up my mind to part with this faithful follower, notwithstanding hints to that effect from M. Botta, who thought the presence of a Turkish non-commissioned officer might be disagreeable to the Bedouins, and bring us into trouble.

We reach Mar-Elias by four o'clock; the sun is going down, and the gates of Jerusalem shut at the Moghreb, that is to say, at the moment when he disappears behind the horizon. Those of our party who must return this evening have no time to lose, if they expect to find the gates still open. None but a father can understand what I feel at this painful moment: my only son is about to part from me; I may perhaps never see him more; and though, in my heart, I am almost tempted to thank the fever which has perhaps saved him from the unknown dangers towards which we are hurrying, I do not suffer the less for this separation, to the idea of which I am not yet reconciled. At the convent-gate, without alighting, we bid each other farewell. Felicien weeps without endeavouring to conceal his emotion; restrained by false pride, I try to appear more calm, but the tears are beginning to choke me, and I hasten to close this painful scene. After a last shake of the hand, I spur my horse

forward to show the lookers-on that I am a man. Edward, whose kind heart sympathises with mine, approaches to offer consolation. My son has left me; but another immediately supplies his place, so I have no reason to complain. Mohammed and Ahouad understand my feelings; both press my hand affectionately, and utter kind expressions. We move on; and I dare not look behind to catch another glimpse of our parting friends. It is only when we arrive at Bethlehem that I am myself again. The sacrifice is over, and now I must resign myself entirely to the task I have undertaken, of exploring a country as little known as the interior of Australia.

We are lodged again at the convent in the same room we had occupied on Christmas eve. The good fathers appear pleased to see us once more, and we are not slow in returning our expressions of gratitude. Immediately on our arrival, as it is still broad daylight, I ascend the terrace on the top of the convent, to mark the bearings of all the important places in the surrounding country.

At the distance of three or four miles due east, there is a range of lofty mountains called Djebel Mottala. Halfway between them and Bethlehem lies the hamlet of Beth-Sahour (Domus vigiliæ?),* which the Franciscan Friars call *Il pastore.* From this place, they tell us, the shepherds came who adored the new-born Saviour in his humble crib. Only ten minutes distant from where I am,

* There was in the territory of the tribe of Judah a station called Beth-Zur, (Josh. xv. 58). Can this be the modern Beth-Sahour? I should think not. Eusebius tells us that this town was situated at the twentieth mile-stone on the road from Jerusalem to Hebron, and this topographical description cannot apply to Beth-Sahour.

to the south-east, is the Grotto del Latte, where the Virgin took shelter, and suckled the infant Christ before the flight into Egypt. Then, again, by east-north-east, and about four miles distant, we descry on an eminence the village of Sour-Bahel; and lastly, behind us, due west, the village of Beth-Djâla.

Whilst I am studying the environs of Bethlehem darkness comes on, and with it a piercing cold, which drives us from our observatory. We descend again to the convent, where we find Messrs. Pizzamano and Barbier, who have followed to join our party in a visit to Mar-Saba. Belly and Loysel have been to explore the country in the direction of the fountain; they have returned also, and dinner is brought in. Our meal passes over gaily. I exhibit no outward signs of sorrow, and if I still feel a pang or two, I conceal them. I shrink from intruding on my friends my private sorrows, and only wish to share with them my joys. Though it costs me an effort, I look at least as happy as themselves.

The Greek patriarch has given us a letter of recommendation to the superior of the convent of Mar-Saba, as the only certain passport to the hospitality of the good monks. All is now ready, and to-morrow we commence in earnest our adventurous expedition.

January 6th.

Before eight o'clock in the morning we were all actively employed. The artists have gone to take a sketch of the females at the fountain; Edward and I are searching for monuments in the neighbourhood. A young Arab tells me there is an inscription in characters unknown to him on a large stone close to Rachel's tomb. It is a good mile off, but on the way we shall

pass by the ancient cisterns called Biar-Daoud, or David's Wells, and they alone are worth our going back for. Guided by the lad, who undertakes to point out the inscription, we set off at once. The sun shines brightly, and though there has been a hard frost, and the road is covered with ice, it is impossible to wish for finer weather.

We first stop at the wells, three in number, and formed in the solid rock. While drawing a plan of the connecting drains, we observe a number of small mosaic cubes, which show that in days of yore these wells have been held in considerable reputation. Why has this name of Biar-Daoud been given to them? Are we to take them for the wells where three brave soldiers of the pious king came to fetch water for him? I am inclined to do so, although these wells are situated five or six hundred yards from the modern Bethlehem.

We read in 1 Chronicles (xi. 16), "And David was then in the hold (or Cave of Adullam), and the Philistines' garrison was then at Bethlehem. (17.) And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate! (18.) And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord. (19.) And said, My God, forbid it me that I should do this thing; shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest."

The present fountain of Bethlehem is just outside the village, quite close to the convent, and on the hill-side. Is it the cistern that was at the gate, and where David's soldiers came to draw water? This seems possible; only I must observe that the name of Biar-Daoud seems to connect the cisterns we are now visiting with the curious fact which we have just related.

Whilst Edward continues his operations to procure an exact plan of this relic, I hasten on to Rachel's tomb, attracted by the hope of finding there some interesting and perhaps unknown inscription. We arrive at the ancient aqueduct, which I have already mentioned when describing the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and on one of the blocks that cover in this aqueduct (known to the Arabs by the name of Qanat-el-Tchouffar),* I am shown a single word, written in characters rather more than three inches high, and of the twelfth century, judging by their form. This word is *Strosi*. Is it the name of some Italian crusader?—or of an ancestor of the illustrious Florentine family of the Strozzi? I cannot venture to decide.

As I am at the aqueduct, I take the opportunity of studying its construction. The canal, cut out of the blocks buried in the ground, is covered over by other blocks formed into small circular arches, alternately jutting out or scooped in, about four inches in thickness. The blocks are a yard wide, about two feet and a half in height, and the canal itself is eighteen inches broad. No one can tell me exactly where the aqueduct terminates. The lad who accompanies me pretends that it unites the

* Meaning in Arabic the *Aqueduct of the Infidels*. In and about Jerusalem the letter Kef is pronounced tch.

Bourak (meaning the celebrated reservoirs,—or tanks of Solomon) to the city of Jerusalem, to which it conveys their waters. Although this aqueduct is nearly everywhere dismantled of its casing, the water is still pure, as I see when the casual passers drink it from their hands.

I next enter the inclosure of Rachel's tomb, where I find a small oualy (chapel), lately built and white-washed. The walls are covered with inscriptions scrawled by Mohammedan or Jewish visitors. Having examined these, I return to Biar-Daoud, where I find Edward, Rothschild, and Philippe searching for insects under the stones. I join them, and in another half hour we think of returning to the convent.

Intending to take a short cut, we climb over a dry stone wall, and in doing this I am clever enough to sit upon my compass, which I had placed in my great-coat pocket, and crush it into fragments. Luckily, I have another, of which I must be more careful, if I intend to keep a reckoning of our journey. The box, which I have thrown away, affords us the edifying spectacle of young Arabs fighting furiously with each other, to decide who shall remain the happy possessor of such a treasure. I am obliged to check the skirmish, and reclaim possession of the box as a present for our guide.

We re-enter the convent by the small low door, which I have already mentioned, and against which you run the risk of breaking your head unless you are very careful. We breakfast with all speed, and by three quarters past eleven take our departure for the monastery of Mar-Saba. We pass along the side of the hill upon which the convent

of Bethlehem stands, and take our course directly east towards the bottom of the valley. The valley is planted with very poor-looking olive trees, and the road is rough and full of stones. Fifteen hundred yards from Bethlehem we reach another cistern, hewn out of the rock, but too far off to contend with Biar-Daoud for the honour of having produced the water which the King of Israel offered as a libation to the Lord.

Five minutes later we are abreast of the hamlet of Beth-Sahour, which we leave about four hundred yards to our right, on the declivity of a low, rugged limestone hill. Five hundred yards further on we discover to our right a range of high mountains, the summits of which may be six thousand yards distant from the road we are following. These are the Djebel-Ouerdis. Here we cross the plain commanded by Bethlehem, and move along the flank of the opposite hills, through rocks the formation of which appears identical with the Jurassic limestone. We next enter a deeper and narrower valley, intersected by the dry bed of a small torrent, which we cross several times while following the beaten track. This valley, encircled by rugged, frowning rocks, is called the Ouad-Elouah. On either side we encounter steep and desolate ravines, untenanted by inhabitants, which give us a tolerable foretaste of the deserts we are about to visit.

At half-past twelve, just as the valley opens into a small plain, a little more than four hundred yards in diameter, we reach a paltry Mussulman oualy, the Qobr-Elouah. Beyond this, the dale narrows; the broken rocky hillocks become more numerous, and form what the inhabitants call the Djebel-el-Qournâa. At a quarter

to one we are on the level of another valley, deeper, but much wider than the last. Here the rocks are intersected by large veins of flint, and terribly dislocated. Seven minutes later we have reached the termination of this new valley. It runs in an easterly direction, is well cultivated, and we observe some Arabs tilling with ploughs drawn by asses. These labourers belong to the Scheikh Hamdan, who returns their salaam, and shakes hands with them as we pass by. The Ouad-el-Arays (so is the valley called) is edged with stone hillocks, and exceeds a mile in length. We emerge from it by ten minutes past one; then pursue for a short time a north-easterly direction, and cross another valley. To our left, about fifteen hundred yards off, we note a building called Dur-Mirbeh.

At twenty-three minutes past one we reach the summit of a hill, from whence we obtain our first view of the shores of the Dead Sea. We pause for several minutes to indulge our full admiration of this imposing spectacle. Before us lies the range of mountains called Djebel-Mar-Saba; to our left, a formidable precipice, at the bottom of which winds the steep bed of the Ouad-en-Nar (torrent of Kedron). From this we are at the distance of about half a league; but it bends rapidly towards the Djebel-Mar-Saba, and we shall most probably soon come up with it, for the convent is built on the steep declivity of its right bank.

Having passed another ravine at forty minutes after one, we file along a narrow neck of land about a hundred yards in length, overlooking, on the left, the Kedron, and on the right a valley, the bottom of which is occupied by the numerous black tents of an encampment of Bedouins. Close to the tents, on the flank of the valley, we perceive

some tolerably large caves, called by the inhabitants Morharrat-el-Hedjar. On the opposite bank of the Kedron, to our left, and towards the front, we note a succession of chalky hills, commencing at the distance of about half a league. We are now on the Djebel-Mar-Saba. Pushing on for some minutes in an easterly direction, then descending about a hundred yards by a difficult zigzag path, we find ourselves, at a quarter past two, in front of the convent where we come to ask for hospitality. The Kedron, which had been running parallel with our road for several thousand yards, now crosses in our front, and goes directly south. Two masses of buildings, connected by a double wall, and erected on the opposite sides of a shallow ravine, constitute the Greek monastery of Mar-Saba. The building on the right, reserved for the reception of females who may visit Mar-Saba, is in consequence named Deir-el-Benat. These lofty elevations are without windows, and bear exceedingly the aspect of a fortress or a state prison. The only entrance is by a small, low, and strongly-secured gate. Immediately over this, and about twenty feet above, there is a narrow gap, or loophole, in the wall. We knock loudly; a basket fastened to a rope is lowered, receives the letter of the patriarch, and ascends again without any visible agency. In a few minutes the gate opens, and we are admitted within the holy asylum.

I make no attempt to count the stairs, the narrow corridors, the innumerable turnings, which we have to traverse before reaching the court of the convent. Nothing can be more extraordinary than the situation of this edifice, standing perpendicularly over the rugged bed of the Kedron. A small garden, planted with

orange-trees, occupies one of the terraces; and blackbirds, with yellow wings, skipping in every direction, impart with their merry songs some cheerfulness to this dismal sanctuary. These birds, we are told, constitute the principal amusement of the monks shut up in Mar-Saba, and seem to have been provided by Providence for that special avocation. We have never encountered them anywhere else; and they are called in consequence the pigeons of Saint Saba.

The monks treat us with much kindness, and are eager to show the marvels of their monastery. These wonders consist, first of all, of a chapel of little pretension, crowded, according to the Greek fashion, with miserable pictures in the worst possible taste. From the interior of the chapel a narrow and steep corridor leads us to an opening overhanging the Kedron. A ladder about twelve feet long, which the monks are very careful to draw up after them, leads down into the bed of the torrent. To the left of the spot where you alight is a low grotto, at the bottom of which rises a cold and very limpid spring. This is the spring of Saint Saba, the pious hermit who has given his name to the convent.

The banks of the Kedron are formed by walls of natural rocks, perforated with caves, but at present inaccessible. The entrances are barricaded by piles of stones without mortar, which indicate that they have been formerly inhabited. By whom? The monks tell us by anchorites, who, retiring from the world, came to live and die in this desert. The Scheikh Hamdan is not of the same opinion. According to his version, the convent has succeeded to an ancient Jewish town, the inhabitants of which lived in the caves and built the walls

which so much astonish us. The true solution appears to be that we have before us numerous samples of the retreats inhabited in ancient days by the primitive Essenians.

In every direction the eye rests on naked rocks, without a blade of grass—a universal barrenness which strikes the heart with melancholy. Nevertheless, we find scattered here and there on the banks of the torrent some pretty hyacinths, with a delightful perfume. A few dwarf bushes, very thorny, and as brittle as glass, complete the vegetation of Mar-Saba at the time of our visit. The rains have probably swollen the Kedron a few days before our arrival, for we find at the bottom of the bed some small ponds of clear water, but so shallow that two or three days' sun must dry them up.

I have named the Essenians; let us inquire a little into the tenets of the sect of Jewish enthusiasts anciently called by that name. The historian Josephus furnishes us with the necessary information. Ever since the days of the Asmonean prince, Jonathan, the Jewish nation had been divided into three sects—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenians. The doctrine of the Pharisees admitted that some events, but not all, were regulated by Providence. According to them, much depended entirely on human will. The Sadducees, on the contrary, acknowledged no interference of Providence in the affairs of the world, and denied the existence of such a power. According to their creed, all the occurrences of this life were submitted to human control; so that happiness was the fruit of man's own wisdom, and unhappiness the consequence of his folly. The Essenians asserted that everything rested with Providence, and that nothing

could happen to man unless it was pre-ordained. (Ant. Jud. xiii. v. 9.)

These sectarians were in high estimation with King Herod the Great, for which Josephus assigns the following reason:—"Amongst them was a man reputed above all others for the holiness of his life, and who foresaw the future by a divine intuition; his name was Manahem. This Manahem, meeting Herod one day, when a child, as he was going to school, predicted to him that he would become king of the Jews. Herod, thinking that the Essenian either did not know him, or was mocking him, replied that he was of humble extraction. But Manahem, smiling, struck him with his hand, and said, 'Thou shalt reign; never forget the blows which Manahem has given thee on this day, so that thou mayest remember that fortune is but fickle. It shall be well for thee if thou lovest justice, religion towards God, and clemency towards thy fellow-countrymen. Unfortunately, I, who know everything, know that such wilt not be thy behaviour; thou shalt be prosperous, thou shalt acquire everlasting renown, but thou wilt forget religion and justice, and at the end of thy life God will punish thee.' At that time, Herod paid no attention to this prophecy; but when fortune had made him a king, he sent for Manahem, and asked him how long his reign would last. The Essenian made no answer; and Herod repeated his question: 'Shall I reign ten years?' 'Thou shalt reign twenty, nay, thirty years; but I cannot name the period of thy existence.' Herod was satisfied with this answer, shook Manahem by the hand, and allowed him to depart. From that day the monarch felt a great veneration for the Essenians." (Ant. Jud. xv., x. 5.)

In another passage (Ant. Jud. XVIII., ii. 5), the historian of the Jews alludes again to the doctrine of the Essenians, and expresses himself thus :—"The Essenians believe that everything must be left to the will of God. They admit that the soul is immortal. They send, indeed, presents to the temple, but they do not attend to celebrate any religious ceremony, because they believe that they offer to the Almighty a more satisfactory worship in their own common sanctuary. In other respects, they are excellent people, employing themselves much in agriculture. Justice is so much respected by them that their behaviour deserves every admiration. All goods are in common, and the rich man does not take a larger share than the poor man who has nothing. They are above four thousand in number. They have neither wives nor servants. They live, each man by himself, but they assist one another. They select from amongst their own body collectors of the public revenue. Those who are so chosen exercise a true priesthood ; their office is to provide the subsistence for the community. Lastly, all submit to the same uniform regulations."

It would occupy too much space to introduce here all the details given by Josephus, in other passages, of the customs of the Essenians. Let me rather refer the reader to the history itself. (See Bell. Jud. II. viii. 2, and following.)

Pliny (Hist. Nat., lib. v., cap. xvii.) informs us that the Essenians inhabited the western coast of the Asphaltic Lake. He writes as follows :—"To the westward, the Essenians draw off from the shore until its vicinity ceases to be noxious. They are a people unlike any other people in the world. They have no women, no natural affections, no money, no companions but the palm-trees. Every day

their number is increased by the addition of candidates, who, wearied with a worldly life, expect repose in utter seclusion; and thus, through centuries, these people miraculously exist without propagation. Below the country of the Essenians is Engadda," &c.

Salvian (Thesaurus Rerum toto Orbe Memorabilium, cap. xxxviii.) repeats the same facts, nearly in the very same words; it is evident that he has copied Pliny, clothing his ideas after his own fashion.

Let us return to our ramble around Mar-Saba. Leaving the bed of the Kedron, we ascend between the rocks the height on which stands the Deir-el-Benat. On the way we enter a spacious cave, closed in with a wall, and find ourselves in one of the singular habitations of the Essenians. The rock is rudely excavated, and exhibits no signs of laboured workmanship. It is evident that, whoever lived here, was satisfied with a retreat, and sought for nothing more.

Philippe has picked up, in the bed of the torrent, some cubes of white stone, which have unquestionably belonged to some very ancient mosaic. Have these cubes been carried by the Kedron from Jerusalem to this spot? Nothing can be more unlikely; and yet, in size, in shape, and materials, they are identical with those which are picked up in immense quantities in the Kedron, in the valley of Jehoshaphat. Our doubts are soon removed; as we follow a drain constructed by the monks between the two divisions of the convent, we find entire rows and slabs of these cubes in regular position. Here, then, has existed, at a very remote period, an important structure. Perhaps the principal sanctuary of the Essenians, the situation of which has been inherited by the convent of

Mar-Saba, just as many other religious monuments have succeeded those belonging to the creeds overthrown by Christianity. The conclusion is probable, although I cannot venture to affirm it.

Our first ramble has been most productive: landshells and curious insects have been gathered in great abundance, giving good promise of what is yet in store; but, under every stone turned over by our naturalists, scorpions and scolopendras abound. They are not yet sufficiently accustomed to these new acquaintances to find them under their hands without a shudder.

Hamdan comes to announce the safe arrival of our luggage. The Scheikh looks thoughtful, so I enquire the reason of his apparent anxiety. He answers me as follows:—"Thou hast many loaded mules, the sight of which is sure to excite the cupidity of the Bedouins we are likely to fall in with. Of course they must kill us all before they touch a single hair of thine head; but our number is too small to keep a sufficient watch, night and day, and to defend thee, if need be, from such attacks as are likely to be directed against thy caravan. If thou dost not double the number of men, on foot as well as on horseback, who march with me, assuredly we shall all perish. Now that I have warned thee, choose what thou wilt do." To this not very encouraging declaration, which I hastened to communicate to my companions, there was but one answer to be returned, I authorised the Scheikh to double the number of our escort, and he pledged himself that the very next morning the reinforcement should arrive. Meidany was therefore immediately despatched to the tents of Thâamera, with orders to bring back the additional force we required.

As daylight waned, we re-entered the inclosure of the monastery. An hour afterwards, dinner was served up in a room furnished completely round with large cushioned divans: these divans were mattresses spread on the ground. Our evening passed tranquilly in writing down the observations of the day, in arranging our zoological acquisitions, and in smoking, as we chatted, innumerable tchibouks. At last the cold began to intrude, and there was no other means of escaping it but by retiring to bed. By ten o'clock we were stretched upon couches much harder than the divans of the dining-room, but enjoying, notwithstanding, a sound and refreshing rest.

At midnight we were suddenly startled from our slumbers by a most extraordinary hubbub. Certainly no bells ever rang out such a discordant chiming as that we heard, calling the monks to the office of the night. On the following day the mystery was explained to us. Some strong iron bars are firmly fixed by one end in the wall of the chapel, and these bars, rudely struck by another, produce the extraordinary sounds which here supersede the duties of a bell. On the whole (not reckoning the vermin), our night has been satisfactory. We have slept well; and, on rising, feel quite fresh and hearty.

January 9th.

Yesterday I thought I had perceived that the Scheikh Hamdan felt a little uncomfortable at the presence of Mohammed. I had, therefore, made up my mind to send him back. A conversation with the Scheikh has removed my impression; and I have retained my trusty follower. My Bedouins have all positively assured me that they have no dislike to this comrade, whose presence I thought might be a restraint on their usual habits. Everything seems

well arranged, and we have now only to think of our departure.

Once more a repetition of the hesitation, delay, noise, and brawling which accompanied our departure from Beyrout. We were ready by seven, but it is ten before we are permitted to mount. Hamdan has kept his word; the additional escort he undertook to provide arrived at dawn; and whilst we are vainly trying to stimulate the activity of our sluggish moukris, the Bedouins squatted on a mound in front of the convent gate, with their horses picketed to their lances, form a striking and picturesque group. No trace of impatience appears on their immovable visages. They whisper and smoke quietly, without seeming even to be aware of the ill-humour, which we check at last by angry words and sound blows.

I try in vain to kill time by collecting some fragments of fossil ammonites, which characterise the soil upon which the convent is built. Three long hours are consumed in running from one mule to another, and in pacifying two pugnacious moukris, by thrashing both. At last, Allah be praised! all are ready; and the signal of departure is given. Our Bedouins leap into the saddle, gallop off to the front, and lead the way. With marvellous circumspection they reconnoitre every hillock, and examine every hollow; and truly they have enough to do, for it would be difficult to find a country more broken and rugged. On every side the limestone rocks, with their jagged surface, are interspersed with veins of twisted flint, shrivelled up like the strings of a violin, grilled in a frying-pan.

Hamdan has resumed his habitual self-possession, and rides gravely with the advanced guard of his little army.

All our Bedouins have a frank and trusty look. Not one of them loses an opportunity of friendly greeting, when he happens to be near us. Their ordinary phrase is this—"Ente mabsouth? Ana mabsouth; Koullhou mabsouth." ("Are you satisfied? I am satisfied. We are all satisfied.") The Khatib and Ahouad especially never fail to repeat this. Ahouad, who sees me rather incommoded by my heavy double-barrelled gun, offers to relieve me from the burthen. I entrust him with it, on condition that he always keeps close to me, that I may resume it at any given moment. Edward is condemned to follow me almost step by step, to be ready to tell me the hour every time we alter the bearing of our route and I require to study the compass. Generally, when I call upon him to look at his watch, he is busily engaged filling his pipe, or lighting a cigar, which leads to some humorous altercations. If he happen to be too slow, I treat him to a volley of abuse in the name of injured topography, to which he usually replies by laughing in my face.

I had not yet experienced the pleasures of travelling in such a country with loaded mules; and now, for the first time, I learn experimentally how much passion these self-willed brutes will force a man to waste who has no disposition to lose time, as the moukris affect great independence, and never look after their beasts unless they are compelled; the mules also pretend to be as independent as their masters, and, guided by the stubborn habit of selecting the most impracticable paths, generally succeed in throwing themselves down. The loads fall on one side —the animals on the other; then the men come up, screaming and making a great display of zeal to remedy the disaster, which a very little care would have avoided.

In the meanwhile the traveller's time is lost, or uselessly employed in cursing both mules and moukris.

The European section of our caravan has decreased by the departure of Messrs. Pizzamano and Barbier, who returned to Jerusalem at the same time we were starting for the Dead Sea. These gentlemen had been long enough with us the day before to find it rather tedious to accompany travellers who think themselves called upon to map the country they pass through. They therefore declined persevering with us in our adventurous peregrination. But to return to our route.

On leaving the convent of Mar-Saba, we proceed first north-north-east, following the course of the Kedron, the bed of which is at least a hundred yards in depth. Along the banks, as we can easily distinguish, the Essenian excavations increase in number. Gradually our road descends to the level of the bed, which we cross at twenty-six minutes past ten, having been on our way twenty-two minutes, twelve of which have been lost in picking up fallen mules and luggage. We then enter the bed of another torrent, which comes directly from the east to empty itself into the Kedron, as do several others running from north to south.

At the junction of the Kedron and the new torrent, which we are about to follow, there is a well hollowed in the rock, the name of which I have not been able to learn from any one of our Bedouins. They call it simply, El-Ber, the well; and thus I am as wise as I was before.

Eighteen minutes suffice to take us to the source of the torrent. We now enter on a narrow table land, bounded by low hills, and crossed by the dry bed of a rivulet

running from north to south ; here we find an encampment of Bedouins, whose vicinity we are made aware of by a host of half-naked children, women in blue shirts, and barking dogs, all hurrying out to gaze on us, though at a sufficiently respectful distance. They are friends of Scheikh Hamdan, who occupy this country ; we therefore pass close to them without feeling any uneasiness.

At fifty-four minutes past ten, we have crossed the plain. Then a rocky descent takes us to the bottom of a rugged valley by nine minutes past eleven. Here again our mules detain us five-and-twenty minutes. As we cannot leave our luggage to take care of itself, if we ever wish to see it again, we are obliged to halt every time our mules are pleased to roll into a pit, which occurs incessantly. I profit by this involuntary halt, to take a glance at the surrounding country. To the right is a range of hills of no great height, the centre of which is distant about five miles and a half. This is the Djebel Emdenys. Beyond is an extensive plain, divided by the Ouad-en-Nar, or Kedron : this is called the Merdj-el-Beqâa. Before us, to the east, an unbroken range of calcareous hillocks ; and lastly to our left, several detached mountains, the highest of which is about a league from where we stand. The formation is always the same, limestone rock, intersected by large veins of flint, curled and twisted as if by the effect of fire. On the side of this mountain, to our left, we descry a large reddish spot. I send one of our Bedouins to bring me a sample of the rock that gives it this colour, so different from the yellowish white appearance of the whole surrounding country. The fragments which he produces resemble exactly the limestone of our own country after it has been burnt.

We are off again at thirty-five minutes past eleven; ten minutes later we pass the red spot, then proceed along the Merdj-el-Beqâa, and after mid-day, almost constantly eastward, after having observed, two thousand yards distant to our left, and backed by broken cliffs, a ruin called by the Arabs, Qalaat-el-Mardeh. Concerning this Qalaat or fortress, Hamdan tells me that it is a ruined castle, formerly inhabited by giants, whose bones have been found in the neighbouring tombs. How much of this Arab legend is true? I cannot tell, and I have no time to inquire. We follow again the dry bed of a torrent, turning eastward. It begins between chalky hillocks, through which it runs nearly in a straight line for little less than three thousand yards; then it sinks to a considerable depth, and its banks become very steep; the stones of which they are composed, appear as if they had been scorched by a violent fire.

At half-past twelve we halt about half an hour for breakfast; then we resume our march in a south-easterly direction, drawing towards the Ouad-en-Nar, or rather this torrent by a sudden turn inclines towards our road. After having passed numerous hollows, and wound along a number of hills, all exhibiting the marks of fire as I have already often mentioned; and after having (from twenty minutes past one) proceeded invariably towards the east, we arrive at fifty minutes past one on the last crest which separates us from the shores we were so anxious to behold. We are now nearly opposite the fountain called Aÿn-fechkhah; but to reach it we have to encounter one of those perilous descents leading from the summits of the mountains of Canaan to

the borders of the Dead Sea. How can men and beasts get over such difficulties? Even now that I have surpassed them, I can scarcely understand. By six minutes after three we reach the level of the shore, not more than two hundred yards from the water. From the summit of the mountain which we have just descended, this strange sea, which all writers describe as presenting the most dismal aspect, appeared to us like a splendid lake, glittering in the sunshine, with its blue waves gently breaking on the sands of the softest beach. Through the transparent water appeared a white tint which enlivened the shore. We guessed at once that this appearance was owing to the salt crystallised under the water, and when near, we find that our conjecture is right.

Are we now to be convinced that no living thing can exist on the shores of the Dead Sea, as has been so often repeated? We ascertain the contrary fact the very moment we touch the shore. A flock of wild ducks rises before us and settles on the water out of gun-shot, where they begin sporting and diving with perfect unconcern. As we advance, beautiful insects show themselves on the gravelly beach; rooks are flying and screaming among the rent cliffs of the steep hills which border the lake.

Where then are those poisonous vapours which carry death to all who venture to approach them? Where? In the writings of the poets who have emphatically described what they have never seen. We are not yet five minutes treading the shores of the Dead Sea, and already, all that has been said of it appears as mere creations of the fancy. Let us then proceed fearlessly

forward, for if anything is to be dreaded here, certainly it is not the pestilential influence of the finest and the most imposing lake in the world.

From the spot where we reached the shore, we move directly south, and enter the delta, situated at the mouth of the Ouad-en-Nar. This delta is composed of gravelly downs, furrowed by the deep water-courses which convey to the sea the waters of the Kedron, when the rains give to that stream an ephemeral existence. This delta occupies along the shore a space about a thousand yards broad; and from the cliffs to the sea, the distance covered by the downs is also about a thousand yards. The mouth of the Kedron itself, where the steep hills, rent by the torrent, dip vertically down upon the beach, is between five and six hundred yards wide. The present bed is at the southern extremity of the delta. On leaving the mountain it runs south, but turns off almost immediately to the eastward, where it loses itself on the beach. We need scarcely add that it abounds in scattered fragments of rock or boulders, swept along by the force of the torrent in its periodical overflows.

Beyond the delta, we cross, at half-past three, an unnamed ravine, passing easterly through a chasm in the cliffs. From this spot, the ground we move on is composed of very fine light sand, in which our horses' feet sink at every step. This sand is efflorescent at the surface, owing to the soil being saturated with salt, occasioned by the reflux of the water during the summer months, when the level of the lake becomes lower. I say the level falls, and this fact cannot be doubted, for at about ten yards from the shore there are trunks of trees half buried in the sand. On seeing them one would

think they had been burnt, for the wood is quite black, as if taken from a fire. Judging by the state they are in, these trees have lain, most probably, for centuries in the same place. Carried away by the mountain torrents which empty themselves into the Dead Sea, they have been deposited on the shore by these waters. Every year, no doubt, the number of these ominous-looking trees increases during the rainy season ; and the Jordan, running with great violence between banks well furnished with vegetation, must have supplied the greater portion of this floated forest.

At the point we have reached by fifty-six minutes past three, the shore is scarcely four hundred yards broad, and the inaccessible cliffs rise perpendicularly. Another water-course forms here another delta, much smaller than that of the Kedron, for it only increases the beach by two hundred yards. The nature of the soil is still the same. Suddenly the shore hollows into a gulf and draws towards the foot of the mountain, from which it is separated scarcely two hundred yards. By three minutes past four we descry a grotto hollowed in the side of the cliff, about three hundred yards from us. A little further on, an opening in the rocks gives passage to the bed of a cascade which has covered the beach with pebbles. Soon after this the shore disappears under a tangled cover of gigantic reeds, coming up to within a few yards of the cliff. Their presence is owing to a magnificent fountain of sweet warm water, peopled with myriads of shells of the species of Melanopsis and Nerita. Several beautiful kingfishers flutter over the rivulet formed by the spring, which is called Aÿn-el-Rhoueyr (the brook of the little morass.) We halt here

at a quarter to five, and our tents are quickly pitched, within fifty yards of the spring.

Whilst we have been following the beach, our Bedouins have gone in quest of pieces of bitumen and sulphur, which the lake often casts upon its shores. They have picked up a good many, but what they most rejoice in showing me, is a small dead fish which they discovered on the sand. At first we are inclined to attribute one more error to the writers who have said so much concerning the Dead Sea. This fish, picked up at a distance of several leagues from any river, has also quite the outward appearance of a sea fish. Are we to conclude from this, that creatures of this kind really live in the lake? Our Bedouins alone can decide the point. We question them one after the other, and from their answers, perfectly coincident, we feel convinced that no fish indigenously belongs to these waters saturated with salt. The floods of the Jordan and of the Arnon (called by the Arabs Cheryat-el-Kibir, and Nahr-el-Moudjeb) frequently carry away the fish that have ventured too near the mouth of those rivers in pursuit of some smaller fry, and and waft them with their prey into the sea: but no sooner do they enter the waters of the lake than they feel as if poisoned, and, unable to escape, die in a short time; their bodies then float, and the slightest breeze throws them on the shore.

A few days afterwards, towards the shore of Sdoum, our Bedouins picked up two other fish of the same description, but nearly decomposed. In these three specimens I thought I recognised a species which abounds in the lake of Gennesareth, and which has

been often served on our table during our stay at Thabarieh.

Whilst our servants and moukris arrange our tents, the Thâamerahs who accompany us, procure fodder for the horses, by cutting as much as they can of the tall reeds which separate us from the shore, and which our horses seem to relish exceedingly. I follow them and gather a plentiful collection of pretty plants that grow between the reeds, especially near the spring. Among others I find a convolvulus, which twists round the high stalks of the reeds and forms an impediment through which our Bedouins open a passage with their yataghans.

Edward and I have brought with us a small double tent; we take possession of it with Philippe, and Mohammed, who sleeps across the entrance. Rothschild has another tent to himself, surmounted by the tri-color flag, astonished, no doubt, at flying for the first time on the shores of the Dead Sea. Our other friends, Belly, Loysel, and Papigny, lodge together in a very large tent, spacious enough to hold us all. Lastly, two other tents, the one reserved for the dragoman, Francis, and Selim, the other for Matteo, and the kitchen apparatus, make up our camp, which in less than an hour assumes a very imposing appearance.

Behind the tents, and on the ascent of the mountain, our horses are picketed, each provided with a large bundle of reeds which he eagerly devours. Our Bedouins pick up some floated wood along the shore, and fires are lighted round the camp. Every fire has sentinels who keep watch by turns, to guard against any sudden surprise. Throughout the night Hamdan visits these different posts, to be satisfied that all his people

are on the alert and vigilant. From hour to hour we hear resounding to a distance the prolonged challenge of "Ya Scheikh Hamdan!" to which the brave fellow replies, by "Thayeb," ("All's well,") and then all would relapse into silence, were it not for the bells of our luggage mules, which alone break the stillness of the night.

The weather is warm, the air extremely pure, and when the moon adds her light to that of the stars, the Dead Sea and our encampment complete such a picturesque scene that we all feel deeply moved, and gaze in ceaseless admiration on a spectacle so new to wondering Parisians.

During the evening I have arranged the plants I gathered during the day; I have named the geological specimens collected on the road; I have completed my journal and traced my map in Indian ink. Midnight overtakes me before my task is done. Every one is fast asleep except the Arabs of our escort, who smoke their tchibouks by the bivouac fires, whilst murmuring the guttural intonations of their strange language. In my turn I visit the different posts, chatting and smoking with the faithful Bedouins, who receive me with all possible respect and affection; I then re-enter our little tent, where I stretch myself without undressing, on my couch, with my arms in order and close at hand.

Not to repeat these trifling details, I shall merely observe that during the twenty nights and more which we passed on the shores of the Dead Sea, we never thought of taking off our clothes to repose comfortably. Security was preferable to convenience. By this arrangement, if not fortified against attack, we are

at least prepared and ready to encounter any unexpected danger.

Though the night has been a mild one, we have been literally smothered in our tent, which resembles an oven. We shall therefore be obliged to give it up.

CHAPTER V.

First night at the Dead Sea.—Ascent of a mountain.—Magnificent panorama.—A dangerous pass.—A well without water.—More volcanic evidences.—Descent to Aŷn-Djedy.—Luxuriant vegetation.—Apples of the Dead Sea.—The tribe of Djahalins.—Extensive ruins.—The En-gedi of Scripture.—Legend of Birket-el-Khalil.—Valley of the gum-trees.—Encamping ground without water.—A substitute.—The sword dance.—Schariar the moukri.

January 8th.

At dawn we were roused from our slumbers by the voice of the Khatib repeating the morning prayer; but I could scarcely affirm that all our Bedouins joined in his devotions. The sun had not yet appeared when we were all up, performing our usual ablutions with much zest in the warm spring of El-Rhoueyr.

Tents such as ours are not struck, nor twenty mules loaded, in a moment. It is near nine o'clock before we are ready to mount and resume our march. This morning the sky is remarkably pure, the sun has risen radiantly, and the Dead Sea presents altogether a splendid view. The mountains of Canâan are clearly defined behind us; those of Moab are still in the shade, and reflect their outline distinctly in the waters of the lake. We look with impatient curiosity towards the southern extremity of the sea, but a slight haze obscures our view; it is still so far off that we can only mark the indistinct profiles of the high lands by which it is bounded.

Yesterday on our arrival at the shore, we marked a

large black mass on the water, which seemed to be advancing towards us, but which we were unable to identify. The Arabs say that it was most probably the trunk of a tree brought down by the Jordan. It may be so, but to-day the mass has disappeared, and the surface of the sea, as far as the eye can reach, is smooth and unbroken as a mirror. A narrow belt, more clear and bright than the remainder, extends throughout its whole length, at not more than a thousand yards from the beach where we have halted. How are we to account for this smooth unbroken stripe? I am utterly at a loss for an explanation.

Whilst breakfast is preparing, to show the Bedouins that our guns are not likely to prove useless in our hands, we send a few bullets against the cliff. A small natural excavation serves for a target, and, though the distance is about a hundred yards, our friends contrive to hit their mark. Some rooks, startled at the unusual sound, come fluttering over the hill side. Rothschild brings down one of them—a feat which completes the astonishment of our Arabs, and their respect for weapons, evidently diabolical. Our eight-barrelled pistols excite their most unbounded wonder. When we have fired the eighth shot, we cease carelessly, remarking that it is quite useless to throw away more powder and ball; and as the brave fellows quickly observe that the lower barrel always fires last, and that there are eight exactly like each other, they are thoroughly convinced that such a pistol can fire as long as it pleases, and that a Cheytan (a devil) alone can have invented and constructed it.

At a quarter before nine we mount our horses and leave the Aÿn-el-Rhoueyr. The beach narrows almost

immediately, and the foot of the mountains, which are here six hundred yards in height, comes in close contact with the thick forest of reeds we must penetrate to gain the open ground. Our progress is much impeded by this singular vegetation ; the loads of our baggage animals are caught at every step, and in constant danger of being dragged off. Our unfortunate mules resemble corpulent gentlemen endeavouring to squeeze through narrow passages.

The beach is here scarcely twenty yards wide, and our entire caravan is so completely entangled in the reeds and prickly thorns, that it takes us ten good minutes to clear this defile. A little further on, the shore widens again considerably, and we find ourselves in front of the beds of two cascades, two hundred yards apart from each other. The gravel swept down by these torrents, when swollen, forms the delta upon which we are moving. By thirteen minutes past nine we reach a spot where the reeds become taller, intermixed with gum-trees. A spring of fresh water must necessarily exist here ; we therefore find ourselves at the Aÿn-et-Thera, the position of which we merely mark as we pass on.

Up to this moment we thought we were marching directly towards Aÿn-Djedy, and that a few hours would take us to that important spot. But we had reckoned without our Bedouins, who inform us abruptly that the track by the shore is no longer practicable, and that we must climb the mountain before we reach Aÿn-Djedy.

This arrangement discontents us not a little ; we have endangered our necks to reach the level ground by descending precipices where a single false step would cost a broken leg or arm at least, and now we are condemned to

repeat our unwelcome gymnastics for two entire days. Scheikh Hamdan says we shall occupy that time at least in winding through the desert of Canâan to reach a point, not four leagues distant, in a direct line. Opposition is useless; our trusty guide assures us there is no other passage, as the mountain hangs perpendicularly over the sea. Prudence whispers that it is better to yield than venture on an obstinate experiment; and thus with deep reluctance we turn our faces from the shore so anxiously desired and reached with so much difficulty.

At twenty minutes past nine we are still between the mountains and the lake, thirty yards from the foot of the cliffs, and five hundred from the shore, to our left, concealed as before by the border of tall reeds. By half-past nine we cross the bed of a torrent forming another double cascade which has deeply indented the side of the hill. Here again the gravel washed down from the heights is heaped up to the extent of nearly two hundred and fifty yards. Once beyond this torrent we find ourselves encircled by the mountain.

The road now becomes steep and stony. The term road is quite imaginary, for there is not really the vestige of a beaten track in this strange country. We have already climbed two cliffs, one above the other, and each a hundred yards in area at the top, before we gain the dry bed of the torrent; then by a zigzag path we ascend a very steep ravine, which narrows continually to a breadth of five or six yards, enclosed between two precipices. This is called the Nakb-et-Therabeh; and terminates in a small rocky table-land, two hundred and fifty yards above the level of the Dead Sea. It is now fifty-three minutes past nine; we have a fatiguing day before us, and as Hamdan

has gone on with his horsemen in quest of a practicable road for our beasts of burden, we profit by necessity, and halt for breakfast.

Our entomologists avail themselves eagerly of this delay. While they are employed in seeking for rare insects, I gaze with rapture on the splendid panorama, stretching out before me. But let my readers be under no apprehension: I shall not detain them by a repetition of my delight. We tire even our dearest friends by constantly reminding them of our regard. How much more surely then do we weary those who are but little interested in our feelings, by dwelling on emotions with which they cannot personally sympathise. This said, I resume my journal.

By two minutes past eleven we leave the Nakb-et-Therabeh to join Hamdan, who has placed himself as a signal post on a rocky summit, a few hundred yards above the level of our present position, in a westerly direction. We can just distinguish a pinnacle of black and gray: it is the Scheikh on his beautiful mare, both motionless, and were it not for our lynx-eyed Bedouins, we should scarcely recognise a friendly cavalier in a small mass visible with difficulty.

Passing between two limestone hills, we arrive at twenty-five minutes past eleven on a rugged plain. Five minutes later we discover to our right, at the distance of six hundred yards, a high mountain with pyramidal spurs, not unlike the indented declivities of the Seine, between Pont-de-l'Arche and Rouen. But here, instead of the rich verdure of the hills of Normandy, we find only the uniform gray tint of the limestone which constitutes the soil of this desert region.

About a thousand yards to our left a deep and abrupt

chasm runs in a parallel line with our road: this is called the Ouad-el-Merabbeh. After having received a water-course running from north to south, it converges rapidly towards us until within a hundred yards. We then turn west, and again north-west, and find ourselves at fifty-five minutes past eleven opposite the southern extremity of the mountain we have just mentioned. We pass a second water-course, tending also towards the Ouad-el-Merabbeh; and crossing a plain, arrive at four minutes past twelve on the brink of the chasm, just where it begins to open. We escape from it with some effort and loss of time in preventing our mules from going down head foremost; no easy undertaking, as these intelligent animals generally select the most dangerous and impracticable paths. Having surmounted this difficulty, we move on without further obstacles, west-north-west, over an uneven plain. At twenty-three minutes past twelve we observe two heaps of stones piled artificially: they mark two Arab tombs, called Taâla-ed-Daouary, as our Bedouins inform us.

At twenty-nine minutes past twelve we have reached the crest of the plain, and descend by the winding bed of a water-course to the brink of an abrupt chasm, running due east and about fifty yards wide, called the Ouad-ed-Derajeh; the sides of this chasm are perpendicular, and yet we must endeavour to cross them. The feat appears impossible. Our Arabs tell me by way of encouragement that the army of Ibrahim Pacha passed this defile with a moderate loss. The place is appropriately named "Break-neck Valley:" truly these Arabs are a humorous race. You go down fast enough—there's no fear of that—only remember the name of the place, and take care not to go too fast. Prudent people try it on foot, and as I have no

wish to have the death of my poor horse on my conscience, I dismount and consign him to my friend Ahouad ; I shall have enough to do to take care of myself. As the scene promises to be interesting, I sit on the brink, and allow the most impatient to go first. Bedouins are like monkeys in scrambling through paths. Not one of our mules is killed, or precipitated down the chasm ; all reach the bottom in safety. But the harder task is still before them—they have to surmount the opposite bank, which is likely to take more time and greater labour.

Our infantry lead the way, and move on in perfect composure over narrow ledges overhanging the abyss from top to bottom. The path is along the bare and slippery rock : mules and horses become obstinate and rebel in terror ; the poor animals have no taste for the hazardous experiment. But as they can neither turn nor retreat, between exhortations and blows they are forced reluctantly to advance. One spot is pre-eminently dangerous : the ledge overhanging the precipice is here not more than a foot and a half in width, circumscribed by a perpendicular rock which turns short round within a space of two feet more. The moukris invoke the prophet, exclaim, shed tears, and would no doubt pluck out their hair by the roots—if they had any under their turbans. On of them forgets himself so far as to abuse Hamdan, who prepares very quietly to blow his brains out, but checks his momentary anger, and does nothing.

The Bedouins then set to work ; every mule is divested of his load, dragged by the bridle, pushed forward with the but-end of a musket, or beaten with the flat of a yataghan until the point of safety is reached. Our horses are disciplined after the same fashion. The luggage is

transported on the shoulders of the men, and the whole party are fairly through the scrape. Well! we must thank Providence, which has constantly protected us, and not provoke disaster by repeating the experiment. It is thirty-eight minutes past one when we are ready to move on again. An hour has carried us over fifty yards, which threatened to terminate our travels for ever.

Again we find ourselves on another plain with small hillocks and many chasms, where we lose a quarter of an hour in sedulously watching our luggage. We now turn southward, and at nineteen minutes past two are enclosed between two mountain-ranges, divided from each other by a plain of fifteen hundred yards in length. Beyond this plain there is a curtain of limestone hills, where we hope to find a cave, a well supplied with water, and an eligible encamping-ground. We double our speed, and by twenty-six minutes past two arrive in front of the entrance of the cave and the well, which is called the Bir-el-Mauqouchieh. But the well contains no water—nothing but a sediment of white clay, cracked and parched by the heat. Hamdan himself looks disconcerted at this untoward discovery, by which we are much more astonished than are our escort. During ten anxious minutes we hold a council. What are we to do? Where are we to go? Where shall we find water to slake our thirst? A puzzling question in the desert! One thing is clear: we must shift our quarters and move on. We may as well be thirsty somewhere else, and spare the mortification of encamping by a well, renowned in name—but without water.

We resume our march and pass between the hillocks, on the brow of which is hollowed out the unlucky Bir-el-Mauqouchieh, and enter another plain, rugged as the one

we have just quitted. The Arabs call this district Belad-Hasasa. Our path is now south-west. At forty-five minutes past two we cross without difficulty the Ouad-Hasasa ; and ten minutes later, being fairly worn out, determined to halt some two hundred yards in advance, at the bottom of a defile between calcareous hills.

Good news ! Our Bedouins, who have no desire to die of thirst any more than ourselves, in searching the bed of the Ouad-Hasasa, have discovered some pools of tainted water. On hearing their joyous exclamation, " Fik maïeh!" —" Water, water !"—we resume our self-possession. Positively, the Belad-Hasasa is a charming country ! We have some foul water to drink. What would we ask for more ?

Whilst they are pitching the camp, Hamdan, who has seen some antelopes and heard some heath-cocks, entices us to search for game along the Ouad-Hasasa. Belly and Loysel look out on their own account ; they bring back some partridges : we cannot get a shot, and bring back nothing but ourselves.

To-morrow we expect to be at Aÿn-Djedy, and there at least we shall find, so we are told, an incomparable spring. The remainder of the evening passes most agreeably ; we dine, smoke, chat, write our notes, and trace the map of our day's journey : all have reason to be satisfied. Edward and I have given up our small tent, and joined company with our friends in their large one. Here, at least, we have room to breathe. The usual fires made up of dry branches are lighted round our camp, and after paying a visit to Hamdan and his people, and partaking of their coffee, we retire to rest. The weather is less warm than at the Aÿn-el-Rhoueyr, by twelve degrees at least ; but

the night is still genial and fine, and we sleep as soundly as we could wish. Edward and Philippe arrange our newly-acquired shells and insects, which promise an abundant harvest.

Whence originate these names of Belad-Hasasa and Ouad-Hasasa? Let us consult the Bible. We read in Genesis (xiv. 7), "And they returned and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar."

We read also in 2 Chronicles (xx. 1, 2): 1. "It came to pass after this also, that the sons of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle." 2. "Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee, from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi."

Thus, the original name of En-gedi was Hazazon-tamar. Our Belad-Hasasa is situated too near Aÿn-Djedy, at the mouth of the Ouad-Hasasa, to allow of any doubt as to the intimate connection between the biblical name and the name still given to that district at the present day. From this we may judge how primitive names are transmitted from generation to generation in the Holy Land.

For the last two days a singular coincidence has attracted our attention, but it is only now we have been able to account for it. From a particular point, the gray hillocks between which we have passed, as well as all the small plains, were marked with long, reddish, oblong stains, always taking the same inclination, and consisting of calcined fragments of flint. When facing the west, the

eastern parts of the hillocks were streaked with them; and wherever a crest had intervened, they appeared no more on the western side. All these streaks were evidently converging towards a common centre; and the farther they receded from that centre, the larger were the fragments; and, contrariwise, the nearer our route approached the centre, the fragments diminished in proportion.

Yesterday, while in the neighbourhood of Mar-Saba, we scarcely noticed this curious geological fact; to-day, the red veins became so frequent that they forced themselves upon our attention.

With a little reflection this apparent phenomenon is easily explained, if we consider the regular disposition and nature of the veins. Any one who has witnessed the operation of springing a mine, especially by a *fougade*, and noticed the arrangement of the displaced stones after the explosion, will be immediately struck by the coincidence of the same effect on the rocks we are now considering. The larger fragments, detached from a superior mass and operated upon by a greater force, are projected to the greater distance; the smaller ones fall nearer the centre. The converging tendency of each axis of these disjointed fragments, begins necessarily at the point from whence they have been propelled. In the present case, the nature of the dislocations, characterised by the action of intense fire, can allow but the one hypothesis, that they have been ejected from a crater. But where was this crater situated? Of course, at the point where every converging axis terminated in a common centre.

From our first arrival on the heights overlooking the Dead Sea, we agreed *à priori* that craters had existed

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same appearance: plains, with calcareous eminences, right and left. Our course has been first south-west, then south-south-east. At thirty-eight minutes past nine we reach another deep ravine, which we enter and follow for some time, though difficult of passage.

At two minutes past ten we enter on an elevated plain, and alter our direction to south-west. Here the hillocks rapidly increase, and at the distance of between three and four miles to our right, lies a range of hills inclining from north-east to south-west. To our left, only five hundred yards off, stands a lofty mountain, called the Djebel-ech-Cheqif. We continue our course to the south-west until nineteen minutes past ten, when, having passed a table-land entirely composed of flint, we arrive above the Ouad-ech-Cheqif, a deep valley, lying one hundred and fifty yards beneath us. But this time the descent is easy. After the Ouad-ed-Derajeh, all roads appear excellent.

At thirty-three minutes past ten we reach the bottom of the Ouad-ech-Cheqif, which forms a tolerably extensive plain, across which we shape our course in a southerly direction. At forty-nine minutes past ten we pass a watercourse, then another uneven plain, towards the centre of which we find an Arab burying-ground. By eleven we reach a crest, from which we discover, to our right, a rugged plain, fifteen hundred yards wide; and to our left, at the distance of a hundred yards, a deep watercourse running from north-east to south. This is called the Ouad-el-Rhor. We march south-west over the plain, and observe a range of high mountains about a league to the right. By fifteen minutes past eleven we turn again suddenly to the east, and find the Ouad-el-

Rhor two hundred and fifty yards distant to our left. Here the volcanic vestiges entirely disappear. We are therefore in all probability quite close to the crater from whence they have been ejected.

At twenty-three minutes past eleven we reach another burying-ground, composed of detached heaps of stones, each covering a separate body. The presence of a cemetery in such a desert can only have arisen from a battle between two hostile tribes. Eight minutes later, we reach a level eminence, five hundred yards in width, overlooking on the west, the shores of the Dead Sea. From this height we descend into a kind of circus, two hundred yards in diameter, joined by a small isthmus (only ten yards broad) to a platform which projects like a spur of the mountain. At this last place we halt for breakfast.

Before us, and about six hundred yards below the spot on which we stand, is the brook of Aÿn-Djedy, near which we purpose to encamp this evening. Two hundred yards lower still, lies the Dead Sea, which we find again, to our infinite joy, as beautiful as ever. The only question is how to reach it by the Nakb-Aÿn-Djedy (the pit of Aÿn-Djedy), a perilous descent we are doomed to encounter, and which even from a distance we contemplate with terror.

During breakfast rain comes on, but fortunately passes over. Our beasts of burthen and our moukris have not halted; they have gone on with the main body of our little army of Bedouins; but Hamdan, Meidany, the Khatib, and Ahouad remain with us. We must, however, make up our minds to take the leap,—the expression is not too strong; and, being refreshed with food and rest, we venture boldly at the Nakb.

Hamdan proposes to me to take a short cut, and I follow him. Every minute we are obliged to sit, and glide down from one rocky pinnacle to another shooting up some yards lower. This operation lasts for nearly two hours. Here and there we encounter skeletons of camels and mules, remains of the victims of the Nakb-Aÿn-Djedy. A single false step has broken their limbs, and necessity has left them there a prey to vultures, ravens, jackals, and panthers. The sight is anything but cheering; but the lesson is profitable, and warns us to be doubly careful, lest we should fall into the same predicament.

Hamdan and I soon pass the caravan, and arrive first on the level of Aÿn-Djedy. It was well the race was over, for I was nearly exhausted with anxiety and perspiration. Once on level ground, or nearly so, I feel rejoiced and confident in being still possessed of all my limbs, and able to stand upright as I move from place to place. A few minutes more, and I find myself surrounded by a grove of trees, beautiful and inviting as fancy can imagine.

I gaze for the first time on an unknown vegetation. Gum-trees, asclepias (swallow-wort), solanums (night-shade), marsh-mallows, and reeds constitute a magnificent oasis, in which a multitude of small birds are warbling harmoniously. The spring is just close by; the water is rather warm, but limpid, and delicious to the taste. It separates into several brooks, which meander and lose themselves under thick brakes, rendered impenetrable by the thorns.

You see on all sides inviting fruits, which you cannot gather without pricking your fingers. This is the orange

of Sodom (the Bortoukan-Sdoum of the Bedouins), or fruit of the *Asclepias procera*. It resembles a middle-sized citron. When not ripe, the green pulp, which is nothing but a thin husk intended to protect the seed, is easily fretted by the mere touch of the hand when gathered carelessly, and then it emits drops of a thick milky juice. When ripe, it opens easily under the slightest pressure, and then a quantity of small flat black seeds appear, surmounted by a silky coating of the purest white. The composition of this fruit has no doubt produced the fable of the apples of Sodom, mentioned by Josephus, which, with the most attractive exterior, dissolved, when handled, into dust and ashes.

Another fruit may likewise claim the honour of being the apple of the Dead Sea, so often commemorated by writers who have never visited the country. This is the produce of a large thorny nightshade, with pink flowers, the *Solanum Melongena*. The fruit is quite round, and, as it ripens, changes in colour from yellowish green to golden yellow. The size is that of a small red apple. It is more agreeable to look at than to gather. When quite ripe, a slight pressure of the fingers squeezes out thousands of small black grains, very like poppy-seeds; and these seeds the imagination of poets has also converted into ashes.

Whilst waiting for the arrival of the caravan, I visit the spring, the ruins of an Arab mill formerly turned by its waters, and two heaps of large stones, ten yards apart from each other, which indicate the site of two important structures resembling towers. I attempt to botanise, grumbling every minute at the thorns which pierce my fingers, and rejoin Hamdan, loaded with treasures, which

I throw down twenty times, with the ill-humour of a pointer compelled to carry a hedgehog.

In another half-hour we are all collected once more. Our friends have passed the Nakb-Aÿn-Djedy without casualty; our horses and mules have not remained behind to augment the dismal show of skeletons; our tents are soon pitched, and the weather is delicious. All combines to elevate our spirits. Every one admires, while smoking, the delightful spot we have reached. At this moment Hamdan whispers to me that the Scheikh Abou-Daouk, to whom he had notified our arrival, will soon present himself; that his coming is most opportune, for if he should delay, we must stop here and wait for his permission before we proceed beyond Aÿn-Djedy. Hamdan says no more; but I now perfectly understand why the road along the beach was impracticable the day before yesterday, when we left Aÿn-el-Rhoueyr—of course, he wanted to secure a job for a friend. A good lie is readily forged in Arabia; and in this traffic, Europeans, with all their aptitude, are poor practitioners in comparison.

Whilst waiting for the Scheikh of the Djahalins, our naturalists ravage the neighbourhood of the camp, and I employ myself in arranging my own specimens. I begin by the usual method of laying them between sheets of paper; but they perforate both paper and adjoining plants, and I must invent some other means to preserve my acquisitions. A deal-board and a piece of rock accomplish the business. I crush and flatten in this way the rebellious thorns; and succeed at last in collecting in a single packet all the prickly vegetables I have gathered.

Whilst I am thus engaged at our tent-door, the Scheikh

Hamdan approaches to tell me that our expected guests have arrived, and wait an interview. They are as rough and thorny as the produce of their land, and I arm myself with patience beforehand, for on the result of this conference depends the issue of our journey.

I prepare to open our case in Arab fashion to the noble chieftains who honour us with their visit. I collect our pipes and *findjans* (these are the small coffee-cups which in Arabia are the emblems of civility); Matteo hastens to prepare the coffee, and I advance with Edward to meet the new-comers. They are four in number, and I find them sitting upon one of the massive ruins which I had visited an hour before. After the customary *Salam Aleikoum*, to which they rise and answer immediately, *Aleikoum Salam*, according to the established etiquette when peace is intended, I invite them to sit down again, and we seat ourselves by their sides.

Coffee and pipes are handed round without interval, while we repeatedly exchange the reciprocal forms of politeness which constitute the current coin between gentlemen of the desert. "Entoum thayebin?" "Thayebin!" "El-hamd Lillâh!" "Oua entoum?" "Thayebin!" "Marhaba bekoum!" "Allah Yessalemkoum," &c. &c.—("Are you well?" "Good!" "Praised be the Lord!" "And you?" "Quite well!" "You are welcome!" "The Lord protect you!" &c. &c.) As it does not require any great expenditure of intellect to keep up a conversation of this nature, I avail myself of the opportunity to study the countenances of our guests, without seeming to stare at them with inquisitive rudeness.

The Scheikh Dhaïf-oullah-Abou-Daouk, who is a

mighty personage, lording it absolutely over all the country we are about to travel through, is a tall fellow, nearly six feet high.* He looks sixty, though strong and muscular as a bull; his brown face is smiling; his cheeks plump; his nose aquiline; his mouth enormous. When he unfolds it, three or four teeth as long as the keys of a piano, and *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, protrude at least half an inch. His voice is hoarse; his eyes bloodshot, and affected by acute ophthalmia. A valuable observation! I will cure the Scheikh with some Regent's pomatum, and expect ever after to become his dearest friend. The costume of the desert monarch is shabby in the extreme. His gown is threadbare; his cloak no better; his turban scarcely retains any distinguishable colour; and his boots, originally red, are in a state of dilapidation painful to contemplate. Another happy discovery! Here is a ready opportunity to dispose of a complete equipment from our stores, and another avenue to the affections of the honourable Scheikh.

On his right hand sits his brother, a fine old man with the expression of a benevolent bandit; always smiling, while his large black eyes embrace your whole person. The dress of this magnate consists of a ragged shirt, a cloak, and turban, equally tattered, and a pair of boots in even worse condition than those of Abou-Daouk. It is quite evident a second suit of clothes will be in speedy requisition.

Let us pass to the two others: I am much mistaken if the first is not the cunningest old rogue within thirty leagues. His nose and lips are thin, his eyes

* Translator's note:—Five feet eight in the original; but the French inch is longer than ours.

black and piercing as a terrier's, his body as lean as that of a cuckoo. The second, a tall, truculent-looking fellow, between thirty and forty; a glance convinces me that he would strangle both father and mother for twenty piastres.

All four have come on horseback, and their horses are tied to the lances, which Bedouins never part with except in circumstances like the present. But they have taken care to retain a complete equipment of swords, khandjars, and pistols, which give them altogether a very complete brigand-like appearance.

Half-a-dozen pipes and cups of coffee being duly discussed, these worthy gentlemen hint, through Hamdan, that they would have no objection to eat a little, and that bread for instance would prove particularly acceptable. Matteo runs to the cantine, and distributes to each of them half of one of the small round thick loaves which are made in Jerusalem. Our guests seem greatly pleased, and each nibbles his share with as much zest as if it was a bun from Felix's.

But we have lost an hour, and have not yet entered in *medias res*. Every time I venture to approach the point of interest, I am saluted with a new volley of "Entoum thayebin?" ("Are you well?") &c. Of course I repeat the appropriate answers, and the conference is once more postponed. Ten times I have expatiated upon my love of the country and its inhabitants, upon my wish to reside as long as possible among them, my very dear friends, my brothers. I might as well be whistling. "Marhaba bekoum," ("You are welcome,") is their only reply; and then follow again the questions concerning my health. It is enough to drive one mad; but there is no remedy.

A second hour slips by us. With untiring perseverance I go through the part I am compelled to act, when just as I am reduced to despair, Hamdan politely begs me to retire and leave him alone to settle business with the Djahalins. Edward and I depart most willingly, and the worthy confederates proceed to debate the question among themselves. For the sake of dignity they remove also, and seek a more sequestered council-chamber.

A third hour rolls on, at the expiration of which we are invited to join the discussion. The pipes and coffee are introduced again, and finally the conditions of Abou-Daouk for allowing us a free passage through his territory, and affording us also his most gracious protection, are explicitly stated. They constitute a duplicate of the agreement we have already made with Hamdan. Abou-Daouk engages to provide us for the same price, with the same additional number of guards on foot and horseback, and to superintend them himself. Our little army is thus doubled at a word, and now amounts to thirty-two effective men; for our Thâameras have not the slightest idea of leaving us, and, though beyond their own ground, they cling to the salary we have promised, and mean to receive it as long as they possibly can. The two tribes appear on the best of terms, and we feel convinced of their cordial co-operation, if danger should arise.

Abou-Daouk considers it his duty to warn us of the imprudence of our attempting to go as far as Karak. This design seems to him quite impracticable, and he advises us to halt at Djebel-Sdoum. Hamdan had cautioned me already not to hint to the Djahalin Scheikh our fixed purpose of visiting the eastern side of the Dead Sea. I therefore

hold my tongue, and subscribe at once to the proffered conditions. We shake hands over the bargain, and feel satisfied that we shall reach at least the mountain of Sodom, and re-commence our march to-morrow morning.

It was high time to conclude the treaty, for we were half-starved, and night came on before we could sit down to dinner. After our meal, Abou-Daouk and his friends visited our tent, when I introduced my travelling companions, towards whom the Djahalin chiefs were lavish of their expressions of friendship and devotion.

Our evening has been delightful: the sky is admirably pure, and our camp, with its bivouac fires, presents under the gum-trees a most curious sight. As soon as our visitors retire, each resumes his usual task: our notes are finished, our acquisitions of the day arranged in order, and we retire to rest with perfect satisfaction.

January 10th.

At break of day we are all on foot, but we lose more time than usual. Our moukris, like ourselves, find Aÿn-Djedy a delightful halting-place. In such a dreary wilderness no one could expect to stumble on this enticing spot. With the first blush of dawn the birds begin to warble, and the unclouded sun sheds the bright lustre of the morning on the oasis we are little likely to visit again.

By four minutes past nine, we are in the saddle, and in line of march passing before the ruined mill I have already mentioned. A door with a pointed arch forms the entrance, and a stone aqueduct, now broken, formerly conveyed the water from the spring to turn one of those primitive and clumsily-constructed wheels, still used throughout Arabia. The foot of the cliff is scarcely a hundred, and the sea-shore not more than six hundred

yards to our left, but both are two hundred yards below the level of the platform where we passed the night.

By seven minutes past nine, marching south-west, we reach the brink and cross the bed of a ravine running towards the Dead Sea. Looking to our left, the shore appears entirely covered with vegetation, verdant as a garden. Ruins are plentifully scattered around, but all apparently of inferior buildings. There are also vestiges of enclosing walls, and massive abutments formed of huge stones. Such are the remains of Aÿn-Djedy, the En-gedi of the Scriptures.

We are now nearly on a level with the Dead Sea; and the shore, covered with detritus, is here four hundred yards in breadth. By thirty-two minutes past nine we pass between two hillocks crowned by ruins. Upon the right hand, about three hundred yards from the road, we descry the remains of a square structure, called by the Arabs El-Qasr (the palace). Here the shore widens rapidly and forms a true delta, receiving the Ouad-el-Areydjah, which opens to our right on the flank of the mountain side. Opposite the eminence, on the summit of which is the Qasr, the shore is barely seven hundred yards broad; in front of the bed of the Ouad-el-Areydjah it widens to a thousand yards.

By thirty-seven minutes past nine we cross the bed of this Ouad, which is commanded, right in front of us, by a large eminence, one hundred and fifty yards in diameter, cleft vertically by the torrent, and covered with ruins similar to those I have already mentioned. By forty-three minutes past nine we halt among the ruins, eight hundred yards from the sea, to await the rear of the caravan, which is more straggling and extended than prudence recommends.

In something more than a quarter of an hour we are all collected, and pursue our course south-west. The shore narrows again, and at seven minutes past ten we cross a watercourse, opening between two large hillocks, standing in advance of others, and forming part of a chain extending to the mountain which constitutes the right bank of the Ouad-el-Areydjah. The ruins of Aÿn-Djedy cease here, and it is evident the ancient city never passed this boundary.

Let us pause a moment, to review as briefly as possible all that sacred and profane writers have taught us of the history of this celebrated locality. I have already said, when speaking of the Ouad and Belad-Hasasa, that the primitive name of Aÿn-Djedy was Hazezon-tamar (the town or hamlet of the palms). Under this same title the town built near the magnificent spring of Aÿn-Djedy (spring of the goat, which name became in after years the designation of the town itself), is spoken of in Genesis (chap. xiv. 7).

Moses, when stating the expedition of the kings leagued with Chedorlaomer (the powerful for ever), says, "And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar." This event was anterior to the disaster of the Pentapolis, and it seems to result from the sacred text, that at that period Hazezon-tamar was the capital of the Amorites. This primitive name is mentioned but once again, in Chronicles, where it is positively identified with that of En-gedi (Chron. II. xx. 2). As the fact concerning which the original name of this town happens to be recalled is contemporaneous with King Jehoshaphat, whilst we find the name already

exchanged for that of En-gedi in the passages concerning David, it seems pretty certain that these two designations were employed indifferently.

In Joshua (xv.), amongst the towns of the tribe of Judah, we find:—61. "In the wilderness Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah." 62. "And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi; six cities with their villages."

At a later period we read in the 1st Book of Samuel:—xxiii. 29. "And David went up from thence and dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi."

Chap. xxiv. 1. "And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.

2. "Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3. "And he came to the sheep cotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet (I purposely abstain from giving the meaning of this expression, which I translate literally): and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4. "And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

5. "And it came to pass afterward that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6. "And he said unto his men, the Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.

7. "So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way." &c. &c.

22. "David and his men gat them up unto the hold."

I should be very much inclined to place the scene of that event in the spacious cavern, called the Bir-el-Mauqouchieh, which is so close to the Ouad-Hazaza. I leave to abler scholars to decide whether this hypothesis is admissible. However, I must observe that although the Bir-el-Mauqouchieh is situated indeed in the desert of En-gedi, and on the road leading to that beautiful spring, it is still sufficiently far from it to leave some doubt as to the identity, which I propose with due reserve.*

In the Song of Solomon (i. 14) we read again, "My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi."

The camphire (kifer) is the henna, a shrub, the leaves of which produce the colour used by the Arab and Turkish women to tinge their nails with pink. Is this shrub still to be found in Aÿn-Djedy? I cannot say. I only know that I have not found it; neither could I discover the vines which Cohen, the learned translator of the Bible, affirms to have been still in existence up to the middle of the last century.

We find En-gedi mentioned once more in a passage of the prophet Ezekiel, and I confess myself unable to understand the following verse (xlvii. 10):—

* M. de Saulcy's hypothesis, with respect to this cavern, is the more likely to prove correct; as, in Oriental countries, especially among wandering tribes—for instance, among the Algerine Arabs of the present day—caverns and grots are usually preferred for sheepcotes, because they offer both shelter and security. The cavern of the Bir-el-Mauqouchieh was the more convenient in that respect, as it also contained a well to water the sheep. Now read again the third verse: "And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave." Here is a threefold coincidence.—TRANSLATOR.

"And it shall come to pass that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many."

If this verse, the mystical sense of which I shall not venture to inquire into, was to be understood literally, it is plain that the words of the prophecy are as yet not accomplished; as, from En-gedi to En-eglaim (probably identical with Aÿn-Adjlah, a locality situated towards the northern point of the Dead Sea, between Jericho and the Jordan), fishermen might spread their nets for a long while without drawing up anything except pebbles and floated wood.

This is all that the Scripture tells us of Aÿn-Djedy or En-gedi. The existence of this city, now completely deserted, lasted until a comparatively late period. Stephen of Byzantium, who calls it Engadda, mentions it as a large town, situated at a short distance from Sodom, in Arabia.

Saint Jerome, in his commentary on the verse I have just quoted from Ezekiel, says that En-eglaim (Aÿn-Adjelim) is at the head of the Dead Sea, where the Jordan empties itself into it, and that En-gedi is at the other extreme point, where the sea terminates. This is quite inaccurate, for En-gedi is situated near the middle of the western coast of the Asphaltic Lake.

Josephus, who was perfectly well acquainted with this town, which he calls indifferently Ἐγγαδὲ, Ἐγγαδαὶ, and Ἐγγαδὶ, places it close to the Dead Sea, at a distance of three hundred stadia from Jerusalem (Ant. Jud. ix). He mentions (Bel. Jud. iii. 2) that it was the seat of one of the eleven toparchies (governments) of Judæa. And,

lastly, he tells us (Bel. Jud. v. 3,) that the assassins who had taken refuge in Masada, under the command of Eleazar, got possession of it shortly before the capture of their fortress by Silva.

Pliny, who calls it Engadda (1, v. 17), says that it was situated below (south of) the country inhabited by the Essenians, and that it was remarkable for its fertility and forests of palm-trees. Lastly, Eusebius (*ad vocem* Engaddi) assures us that the balm of Gilead came from this city.

I have mentioned all that remains of this celebrated place—an immense area, overspread with fragments of antiquity, the ruins of an Arab mill (perhaps more ancient than it looks), a spring of pure water, and a splendid vegetation. As to the vines and palm-trees, they may have existed formerly, but there is no sign of them left.

Let us now return to our itinerary.

At the spot where the ruins of Aÿn-Djedy end, we are only two hundred yards from the sea, and, as we keep moving in the same direction, we draw nearer and nearer to the shore, so that by fifteen minutes past ten we find ourselves at the head of a gulf, the beach not being more than sixty yards to our left. By seventeen minutes past ten we reach another ravine. Here the beach, which is one hundred yards broad, is covered with large stones. To our right is a high mountain, distant five or six hundred yards; for the first time we find the air strongly tainted with sulphur, exactly like the smell of the Baréges water. Everyone knows that this smell is not unwholesome, and only in a slight degree disagreeable. The water of the lake is here of a whitish colour, and the stones it washes are coated with a milky tint, which sufficiently

denotes the presence of sulphur, even if the odour had been less perceptible.

At twenty-three minutes past ten we reach another ravine, the shore continuing to widen; at thirty and thirty-six minutes past ten we meet two waterfalls on the side of the mountain, two hundred and fifty yards to our right. Two corresponding trenches furrow the delta, which is here five hundred yards in breadth, formed by the gravel washed down by these torrents, which at certain periods empty themselves into the sea.

We halt five minutes, to allow our luggage to close up, and then resume our course south-south-west. From thirty-nine to fifty-four minutes past ten the shore narrows to about two hundred yards, and is broken by large pools formed by the retreat of the sea when it sinks below the usual level. By fifty-four minutes past ten we reach another rent in the cliff, down which a cascade precipitates itself into the sea.

At fifty-six minutes past ten we are marching due south, between a high mountain, not more than fifteen yards distant to our right, and the sea, which is only five or six yards to the left. By two minutes past eleven the hills we have rounded are succeeded by another range a great deal lower; and at length, by eight minutes past eleven, we reach Birket-el-Khalil, which marks the extremity of the deep gulf beginning at Aÿn-Djedy. From what is this name of Birket-el-Khalil derived? I put the question to our Bedouins, when the Scheikh Hamdan relates the following story during our temporary halt:—

"Abraham, known to the Arabs by the name of El-Khalil (the friend of God), which name he has also

left to the town of Hebron, where he resided, came one day to this very spot, with his mule, to purchase his usual provision of salt—the inhabitants of the place being accustomed to prepare salt, and sell it to the people of the upper country. The salt-merchants had the impertinence to tell Abraham they had none to sell, though there were large heaps of salt lying around. The friend of Allah, incensed by such audacity, determined to punish the offenders. So he answered thus: 'You say you have no salt—so be it: you have none left, and never shall you have any more. You shall no longer find salt in this place, which I curse; and, moreover, the road from hence to Hebron is closed against you.' Immediately the anathema of the patriarch was accomplished—the salt changed into stone, retaining still its original appearance, and the Ouad-el-Khalil ceased to be practicable for travellers. The guilty traders vainly entreated for pardon: Abraham was inexorable—he ceased to traffic with them, and from that day the Birket-el-Khalil is strewed with salt, which is not salt, but tasteless stones."

I have not altered a syllable of Hamdan's story, which, told on the spot, produced considerable effect, the Bedouins believing in it implicitly; nothing would shake their conviction that the stones forming the soil of Birket-el-Khalil are the identical heaps of salt metamorphosed by the curse of Abraham. "Chouf," say they, "fih melehh, ouélakin ma fich melehh" ("See, 'tis salt, and still it is not salt.") I picked up some samples of the crystallisation which has given rise to this strange legend; and we resumed our march at twelve minutes past eleven.

In front of Birket-el-Khalil the shore is only a hundred yards broad; then comes the Ouad-Khabara, a valley

extending five hundred yards to our right, and commanded on its southern flank by a large mountain of the same name, Djebel-el-Khabara. The highest pinnacle of that mountain is nearly three miles off, and along its declivity are smaller hills and hillocks, lowering gradually until they approach within one hundred and fifty yards. By thirty-five minutes past eleven we are opposite the Ouad-el-Khalil, which opens by a small triangular plain, five hundred yards wide, into a wide delta. We are here one thousand or twelve hundred yards from the sea, and on the eastern shore, opposite, we have directly in face the summit of the Djebel-Atarous.

By forty minutes past eleven, still bearing to the south-south-west, we cross the various beds through which the waters of the Ouad-el-Khalil rush from the mountains of Canâan into the Dead Sea. We are then equally distant from the shore and the high mountain range which bounds the horizon to our right, and about six hundred yards from both. The side of the mountain is indented with a circular hollow, resembling a crater, overlooked on the north and south by two lofty pinnacles. Ten minutes later we are opposite this spot; the plain which separates us from the mountain is dotted with small eminences of a dirty green colour—mere sand hills, worn and corroded by the winter floods.

At fifty-five minutes past eleven we halt for breakfast in this glen, four hundred yards from the shore. By twenty-eight minutes past twelve we mount again, and pursue our march in the same direction, south-south-west. We cross the bed of another torrent, containing an islet composed of sand and rolled pebbles, and arrive by forty-five minutes past twelve in front of the Ouad-el-Seyal

(the valley of the gum-trees), which opens nine hundred yards off on our right. We are now two hundred and fifty yards from the sea, marching due south in a parallel line with the shore.

The range of hills commanding the southern side of the Ouad-el-Seyal inclines rapidly to the west. We cross many more dry watercourses before one o'clock; the foot of the hills is now distant about two thousand yards. We change our course and march south-east until eight minutes past one. The shore is then three hundred yards off, and a new range of hills appears at the distance of nearly two miles to our right. The green sandy hillocks we have already noticed, cover the plain lying between us and this range. We then alter our course to south-south-west, coasting a small gulf, beyond which the shore widens rapidly. By twenty-nine minutes past one we are seven hundred yards from the sea. The calcined fragments of rock composing the volcanic ejections already noticed, appear again, profusely scattered over the ground.

By degrees we incline almost due-west, bearing away from the Dead Sea; and by forty minutes past one march in the direction of a mountain, the side of which seems to have been rent by some volcanic eruption; this mountain, commanding the northern side of the valley, or Ouad-el-Hafaf, is distant about three-quarters of a league. By forty-eight minutes after one we pass the bed of a torrent, thirty yards wide, which forms the outlet for the waters of the Ouad-el-Hafaf. Beyond this lies a plain, deeply furrowed and covered with hillocks of greenish sand, between which we wind our course until ten minutes to two, when we reach a lower level, bounded by a

watercourse, on the other side of which we turn again to the south-south-west.

Nothing can be more fantastical than the variety of shapes assumed by these crumbling hillocks. Some of them resemble an old gothic castle, with round towers built close to each other, but without connecting curtains, and with their bases half buried under conical heaps of fallen rubbish. By six minutes past two we are in front of the Ouad-en-Nemrieh (the valley of the tigers or panthers), with the hill commanding the southern side of this valley only fifty yards off to our right. We then march nearly west, but soon after turn suddenly to the south, and keep steadily moving in that direction until forty-five minutes past two, when we arrive at our halting station for the day. We encamp on the side of a hill, nearly three miles from the sea.

Five or six hundred yards to our left a plain commences, covered with sand hills of a whitish green. These hillocks present a most extraordinary aspect. It is necessary to assure us positively that we are not gazing on an extensive city, for we see distinctly what appear to be palaces, mosques, towers, houses, streets, embankments, and other innumerable edifices, constructed of white marble. From the elevated spot where we pitch our tents, we discover eastward, towards the sea, the peninsula of El-Lisan, the shores of which do not seem divided from the western coast on which we are standing by more than two or three thousand yards. The sand hills re-appear again on this peninsula, and one could almost affirm that two large towns face each other on the opposite but closely-approaching shores of the Dead Sea.

Behind us we observe a large rent in the mountain,

surmounted by a high peak, crowned with ruins; this is the hill of Sebbeh, and these ruins are the remains of Masada, the last rampart of Jewish independence. To-morrow morning we project an antiquarian pilgrimage to these venerable relics.

The Schiekh Abou-Daouk has kept his word: our tents are scarcely pitched when his people join us; they are much darker in complexion than the Thâameras, and their dress consists only of a coarse gray shirt, with a kafieh (turban) of no definable colour. Their shoes, when they have any, consist merely of soles, bound with strings round the great toe and the ankle, bearing some analogy with those worn by the mountaineers of Arragon; some wretched-looking matchlocks, with yataghans and khandjars no better than the fire-arms, complete the equipment of our new body-guard.

When passing in front of the Ouad-el-Seyal, we had descried at a great distance the heads of two or three camels, and we had been somewhat startled by the apparition. Some of our attendants went out to reconnoitre our neighbours, but they were reported to be friends, and so we thought no more about them.

During the day Hamdan has left us in quest of some encampment where he might purchase two sheep, one for ourselves, the other for our escort, whom we propose to astonish with a treat. As he has not yet returned, to the general dissatisfaction, our trusty Arabs find themselves obliged to resign their gastronomical visions, which we had rather imprudently excited.

Unfortunately the want of fresh meat is not our greatest privation: we have only enough water left in store to make our soup and coffee for this evening and to-morrow

morning. We have none to spare for drinking, and must endure our thirst with patience. Our horses, mules, and Arabs are reluctantly compelled to follow our example. We had been promised water in abundance in the bed of the cascade that divides us from the hill of Sebbeh, but we find not a single drop. "Ma fich maïeh!" ("No water!") On hearing this dismal cry, our thirst naturally increases, while our poor beasts are the only uncomplaining members in the party, though they suffer even more than ourselves.

On our arrival at the encamping ground, Mohammed, who, from the first, had felt mistrustful of the water in this sombre-looking place, had gone on in advance, and scrambled with his horse up the side of the Sebbeh. He returns to announce that the wisest course we can adopt to-day is to persuade ourselves that we drank enough at Aÿn-Djedy yesterday to serve us for eight-and-forty hours. However, he confides to me in strict confidence that he discovered in a hollow between the rocks, water enough to satisfy his horse, and that the whole adjacent country is not likely to produce as much more as would slake the thirst of a pigeon. It is true, we may retreat on our wine: but such wine!—shaken, heated, nauseous from the leather bottles in which it has been tossed for many days under a burning sun. The substitute is lamentable, but despair will not furnish water, so we summon our philosophy, and resign ourselves to the chance of hydrophobia.

We purpose to console our Bedouins by increasing their usual allowance of oil and flour, and we find our calculation fortunate; with more *to eat*, they willingly compound for less *to drink*, and bear the privation patiently.

Our moukris are less resigned, and for the first time evince some show of compassion for their beasts. I do not wish to analyse too closely this novel sentiment in favour of the poor creatures committed to their charge, who look this evening more dull and beaten down than usual, when consigned to their accustomed pickets.

The ground on which we encamp is parched and arid; rocks which seem to have been toasted for ages, excoriæ, and fragments of lava; such are the components of this attractive soil, the aspect of which would alone suffice to make patience itself irritable and thirsty.

It may be readily supposed that our dinner passes heavily; but, to our surprise, when night comes on, we hear our whole suite singing. Truly miraculous is the effect of a supplemental ration of flour and oil on the heart of a Bedouin! The fellows are as gay and joyous as if each had drank a bottle of champagne. They dance as well as sing! Let us hasten to enjoy this curious sight. We forthwith leave our tents, and proceed to smoke our chibouks by the side of these merry companions, whose outlines are reflected in dark, whimsical shadows upon a fire of dry thorns. I say thorns; for as to finding wood to burn at Sebbeh, the idea is chimerical.

The dance our Arabs are executing is called the "Sword Dance." This sample of barbarous choregraphy is thus arranged:—Eight performers, holding each other by the arms, but with their hands thrown forward, chant a burden which is repeated *ad libitum*. The four on the right begin; they clap their hands in cadence, whilst swinging their bodies either from right to left, or backwards and forwards. When they have done, the four on the left repeat the same words, clap their hands in the

same manner, and perform exactly the same contortions. Facing them stands another actor, who is silent, and keeps time with the blade of his sword striking against the faces of the singers. Sometimes he advances upon them, when they draw back; then he retreats in turn, and they advance on him, bending down and almost crouching to the ground. As they spring up, they send forth a shrill, guttural cry which gives a fiendish effect to the whole performance. As the singing and dancing become more and more energetic, their faces assume an expression of increased ferocity; and after half an hour of this strange exercise, they resemble so many wild beasts, anticipating a projected murder.

This spectacle, witnessed by night, in such a place, and by the light of the bivouac fires, is highly exciting, as much to ourselves as to our Bedouins, who remind us of Red Indians and their savage pastime. Those who are not engaged in singing, accompany with their hands. The Khatib himself, their chaplain-in-ordinary, leads the choristers; and Meydany is the actor with the sword, at the same time gathering up the skirt of his gown with his left hand, that his rapid motions may meet with no impediment.

This performance has already lasted a whole hour, when our moukri, Schariar, takes the place of Meydany, and exhibits his artistic skill. Never was sabre handled with such dexterity; he seems surrounded with a circle of steel, so rapid are the rotations of his blade in every direction. Meydany is but a novice when compared to Schariar. But the "Sword Dance" soon finishes, and our moukri, who is well known as a choice spirit, and the most accomplished vocalist of Beyrout, volunteers a

succession of songs, as highly flavoured with salt as the waters of the Dead Sea, embellishing the words with most expressive gestures. The enthusiasm of our Bedouins exceeds all bounds; their sunburnt faces gleam with rapturous admiration, and Schariar's unrivalled exhibition is greeted with loud bursts of applause.

One word more before I take leave of Schariar. On quitting Jerusalem, this fellow wept in utter despair; but ever since our march began, he has become the gayest and most reckless of the party. How constantly we make mistakes in judging character! Schariar, who voluntarily cut off two joints from his right hand to escape the conscription, would make a first-rate soldier; for he fears nothing, and is thoroughly expert in the use of every weapon. But, as I said before, Schariar is an habitual lounger in low *cafés* and dens of ill-repute—what, in Parisian cant, is called a *viveur*—"a loose fish." This explains the riddle of his conduct, which we attributed at first to cowardice.

As we cannot pass the entire night in looking on the revels of our Bedouins, we bestow an additional donation of coffee and sugar, which inflames their joy and gratitude to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; we then retire to rest, for to-morrow we purpose to be up by sunrise to visit the ruins of Masada.

CHAPTER VI.

Ascent of Sebbeh, or Masada.—Fortress of King Herod.—The Sicarii, or Assassins.—Eleazar.—Siege of Masada.—The garrison immolate themselves.—Assault by the Romans under Silva.—Ruins of Masada as they are at present.—Gothic gateway.—Descent from the ruins.—Previous visitors.—Captain Lynch's narrative.—Diary resumed.—Remains of Roman lines.—Indications of a lion.—Water of the Dead Sea.—Beds of lava and extinct volcanoes.—Agreeable encampment.—A good night's rest.

January 11*th.*

This morning we were all stirring before daylight. The ascent of Masada, judging from the height we had to climb, promised to be no easy task. It was, therefore, desirable to start before the sun had made much progress. We have hurried Matteo's culinary preparations, and after having, as usual, sipped some broth in which meat was the principal ingredient missing; after having discussed a cup of coffee, a chibouk, and a taste of arrack, we find ourselves *en route.* Our faithful Ahouad, and two Djahalins almost naked, are our only guides and escort; we are well furnished with loaded pistols, the priming of which has been carefully looked to. We then commence the arduous escalade we must achieve before we reach the eminence we are so anxious to explore.

I shall not attempt to describe, after Josephus, the stupendous path that leads to Masada; I prefer copying exactly the text of the Jewish annalist, which I can

scarcely hope to improve. What was Masada, and what were the events connected with that place, unparalleled in the history of the world, Josephus tells us; I shall, therefore, borrow from his "History of the Jewish War" the entire narrative of the sad catastrophe, the scene of which was laid in Masada.

I beg to offer one more observation before I enter on this recital. The word Masada signifies "fortress;" this is the Hebraic meaning, without any alteration. Never has any spot been marked by a more appropriate title. The name is now unknown to the Bedouins, and was merely, perhaps, a general term, quite distinct from the real appellation of the locality. What inclines me to this opinion is, the correct signification of the word Masada; and the existence of another name, Sebbeh, retained by the Arabs, and which it is not likely they could have invented without analogy. After the sack of Masada, to continue calling a place "the fortress" *par excellence*, which Roman tactics had reduced, would have been a downright mockery; and thus I propose to account for the disappearance of the word Masada.

Pliny * speaks of this town as being a fortress situated on the summit of a rocky hill, and he places it quite correctly as coming next to Engaddi. Strabo calls it Moasada,† and mentions the calcined stones which are found in the neighbourhood of this singular spot.

Let us now proceed with our quotation from Josephus:—"The high-priest Jonathan," says he, "was the first

* Lib. v. 17. † Lib. xvi.

man who conceived the idea of fortifying this post, considered impregnable, and who gave it the significant name of Masada (the fortress). At a later period, King Herod added considerably to the fortifications, and increased their strength."*

In another very striking passage, Josephus expresses himself as follows:—"There was, not far from Jerusalem, a very strong citadel built by the ancient kings, where, when they happened to meet with reverses in war, they placed in safety their treasures and their persons. The Sicarii, or assassins,"—(Josephus gives this appellation to those among the Jews who, being determined not to submit to a foreign yoke, had resolved to die, to the last man, in carrying on a desperate resistance against the Romans. In our days, we have heard French citizens denounced by their own countrymen as *brigands of the Loire*, who quite as justly deserved that infamous appellation as the last defenders of Jewish independence. And it is a Jew, a traitor to his country, who brands with the name of cut-throats the handful of heroes who took refuge in Masada! To what inconsistencies will human passions lead us! But let us copy without further commentary):—"The Sicarii, then, having got possession of Masada, made continual inroads on the surrounding country, seeking for no other plunder than what they absolutely *required for subsistence; fear* restrained them from committing depredations on a larger scale. Hearing, however, that the invading army of the Romans had gone into quarters for rest, and that the Jews of Jerusalem were divided by sedition, and driven to despair by the most oppressive tyranny, they sallied out by night, and committed the

* Bel. Jud. vii. viii. 3.

most fearful excesses. On the day of the feast of the Azymi they fell suddenly upon the small city of Engaddi. The inhabitants, taken by surprise, and having no time to prepare for defence, were dispersed and driven out of the town. All who could not escape by flight—men, women, and children—numbering above seven hundred, were put to the sword. After having plundered the houses and ravaged the gardens full of ripe fruit, they hastened back with their booty to Masada. From that time they continued to waste the neighbouring country, supplying their ranks daily from the numerous predatory bands who had no other means of life.*

"Shortly after that, Simon, the son of Joras, who for his presumption had been deposed by the high-priest Ananas from the government of Acrobata, contrived to escape from Jerusalem, which was then placed under the tyranny of John, and came to ask for an asylum with the Sicarii of Masada. They at first suspected him, and confined his residence to the lower town, where he established himself with the women who had followed him, while the Sicarii remained exclusive masters of the upper town. Soon, however, the zeal that Simon displayed in their expeditions, gained him their confidence, though they still rejected the advice he gave them to strike more decisive blows. This Simon succeeded at last in forming an army of his own; and then, separating from the inhabitants of Masada, began committing the most atrocious depredations throughout the whole of Judæa." † Solicited by the people to come to Jerusalem, it was he who co-operated the most strenuously in the defence of the town against the Romans; but, being

* Bel. Jud. iv. vii. 2. † Bel. Jud. iv. ix. 3.

taken prisoner, Simon was transported to Rome, where he figured in the triumph of Titus. The last act of that ceremony was the execution of the Jewish hero.

"Jerusalem and Machæros had successively fallen; the Jews retained but one stronghold, Masada; and the Romans determined to destroy, at any cost, this focus of insurrection.

"Battus, Prefect of Judæa, having died, Flavius Silva was appointed his successor. His first thought was to march against Masada. The place was then commanded by Eleazar, of the tribe of Judah, a skilful and intrepid warrior, who, when the Censor Quirinus had been sent into Judæa, had excited a general rebellion. The Sicarii, by the order of Eleazar, denounced as enemies all their countrymen who had submitted to the Roman yoke—plundered their possessions, and burned their habitations. To give a sanction to these lawless acts, they pretended that there was no difference between the invading foreigners and the degenerate Jews, who had betrayed their country, and had voluntarily become the vassals of Rome. But the plea was an idle pretence," adds Josephus, "to excuse and give a colour to their own barbarism and cupidity."*

Accordingly, Silva determined to crush what, in his opinion, was but the last nest of the rebellion: we give verbatim from Josephus his narrative of this expedition;—

"The Roman general, at the head of his army, marched against Eleazar, and the banditti who held Masada. Having seized the surrounding country, he

* Bel. Jud. vii. 8.

established garrisons in every convenient post, encircled the fortress with a wall, so as to cut off all means of escape from the besieged, and placed detachments to watch them narrowly. Silva selected for his encamping ground the most commanding point in the immediate vicinity of the fortress; but, in other respects, it was extremely difficult for him in such a position to provide himself with the necessary supplies. Not only were the ordinary articles of subsistence brought from a great distance, and with enormous difficulty, by the Jews who had undertaken to furnish provisions for the army, but even the water had to be conveyed to the camp, for no spring was to be found in the neighbourhood. Having made his preliminary dispositions, Silva began the siege with great skill and infinite labour, owing to the position of the fortress, of which the following is an accurate description.

"It stands on a very elevated rock, the circumference of which is considerable, surrounded on all sides by valleys so deep that, from the summit, the bottom is scarcely distinguishable. This rock is perpendicular, and totally inaccessible, excepting in two places, where the slope is difficult of approach. There is one road to it leading from the Asphaltic Lake on the eastern side, and another, more practicable, coming from the westward. The first is called the *Coluber* (or Snake), on account of its narrow breadth and numerous windings, which give it some resemblance to a serpent. It is, in fact, little more than a broken ledge on the side of the rocks which overhang the precipice, often turning back again, and scarcely forming a connected passage. Ascending by that path, you must walk with cautious

and stealthy pace—a single false step would lead to certain death; for the rocks are nearly vertical above and below, and their appearance strikes terror into the boldest hearts. When you have clambered up a space of thirty stadia, the rest of the ascent is perpendicular; but the rock does not end in an acute point, and the summit widens to an esplanade. The high-priest Jonathan was the first who built a citadel here, which he called Masada. In after years, King Herod added many formidable defences. He enclosed the summit within a wall of polished stone, having a circuit of seven stadia, twelve cubits in height and eight in thickness. The wall was flanked by thirty-seven towers, fifty cubits high. These towers communicated with buildings resting on and continued along the line of the interior wall. The circle of the esplanade contained a soil more productive than any in the vicinity. The king reserved this space for purposes of culture, so that, if provisions could no longer be obtained from the exterior, the garrison of the fortress might still be saved from famine.

"Herod built also, opposite the approach on the western side, a palace within the fortifications, looking towards the north. The outer walls of this palace were high and solid, protected at the angles by four towers of fifty cubits in height. Within it were contained many spacious apartments, porticoes, and baths, supported by columns formed from a single block of marble. The pavements and the walls of the chambers were inlaid with mosaics. In every habitation, on the esplanade, around the palace, and before the walls, large tanks were hollowed in the rocks, to preserve the water as abundantly as if there had been natural springs within

the place. A covered way, imperceptible without the walls, led from the palace to the most commanding part of the citadel. The open paths of approach were almost useless to an enemy. The eastern road, as we have already explained, was by its nature inaccessible; and a tower placed in a very narrow defile, closed the avenue on the western side. This tower was distant from the citadel a thousand cubits; it could not be passed by, and was unassailable by force. Thus nature, seconded by human ingenuity, combined to render the fortress secure against every possible attack.

"As to the interior resources, their abundance was even more surprising; corn was heaped up in magazines, and in vast quantity. These secret stores contained also ample provision of wine, oil, vegetable seeds, and dates. Eleazar and his banditti, when they obtained possession of the fortress by stratagem, found all these provisions in as good a state as if they had just been placed there, though nearly a century had elapsed since the magazines were first formed to resist the Roman invaders. The Romans themselves, when they became masters of the place, found in it the remains of these supplies, which seemed quite fresh. This extraordinary preservation of food must doubtless be attributed to the pure atmosphere, and the height of the fortress, which protects the air against the deleterious influence of the plains. The citadel contained, besides, a sufficient quantity of arms to equip ten thousand men, with stores of unwrought iron, brass, and lead.

"Such precautions had not been taken without important motives. It is said that Herod had caused this citadel to be built, as a refuge against the double danger

which he apprehended : in the first place, he dreaded that the Jewish people should drive him from the throne, to restore the descendants of their ancient kings ; and secondly, he was still more apprehensive of the intrigues of the Queen of Egypt, Cleopatra, who took very little care to conceal her designs ; for she openly urged Anthony to put Herod to death, and transfer the kingdom of Judæa to herself.

"Long after Herod, induced by the fears we have mentioned, had constructed Masada, the capture of that fortress was the last feat accomplished by the Romans in their war against the Jews.

"As soon as Silva had succeeded in completing his wall of circumvention, and had adopted every measure that care and vigilance could suggest, to prevent the possibility of escape by any of the garrison, he began the siege at the only point against which an attack could be directed. Beyond the tower which closed the western path, towards the palace and the summit of the fortress, there was a rocky eminence of great extent, but lower than Masada by three hundred cubits ; it was called Leuké. As soon as Silva had reached this post, he began to construct thereon an earthen mound. By the persevering labour of his soldiers, he raised the level about two hundred cubits ; but the ground was not yet solid enough, nor was the height sufficient for the battering engines. Above this mound, again, he built another platform, composed of huge rocks, and measuring fifty cubits in length and breadth. On this he placed his engines, similar to those used by Vespasian and Titus in besieging towns ; and lastly, he erected a tower sixty cubits high, completely cased with iron, from the top of which the Romans, by means of slings

and cross-bows, drove the defenders from the wall, and suffered not a man to show his head.

"Silva, having at the same time erected an enormous battering-ram, assailed the wall without intermission, and succeeded in throwing down a considerable portion. Meanwhile the garrison laboured hard to raise as fast as possible an interior rampart, which might not, like the outer one, be damaged by the action of the engines. To render this second wall soft, so as to deaden the violence of the blows, it was constructed in the following manner: long beams were placed end to end; two parallel rows of these beams were separated by the intended thickness of the wall. The interval between was filled with earth; and, to prevent the earth from bursting out, cross-beams were added to strengthen those which were connected lengthwise. The construction of this rampart resembled a solid edifice; whilst the blows of the engines, falling on a yielding surface, lost their power; and the repeated shocks helped to combine the materials more strongly together, and gave additional compactness to the entire fabric. When Silva discovered this, he commanded his soldiers to hurl against this new obstacle a quantity of lighted brands. The wall, almost entirely made of wood, caught fire immediately, and, burning from one end to the other, projected a tremendous flame. At first the wind, blowing from the north carried the flame directly towards the position of the besiegers, and threatened the destruction of their own engines. But, suddenly shifting round to the south, as if by Divine interference, the flames were hurled back again, and consumed the rampart of the besieged from top to bottom. The Romans, thus favoured by Providence, remained at their post, with the fixed intention of advancing

to the assault on the next morning. During the night they increased their usual vigilance to prevent the escape of a single individual of the garrison.

"Eleazar had no idea of flight himself, and he was fully determined to allow no such refuge to his followers. Reduced to despair by seeing his last intrenchment destroyed; reflecting, also, on the cruel treatment reserved by the Roman conquerors for the women and children, he resolved to die, with all his people, as the best alternative remaining in their choice. He assembled all the bravest spirits in the garrison, and implored them to adopt this dreadful resolution; he pointed out the consequences of a capitulation, the abject misery of bondage. 'With to-morrow's dawn,' said he, 'you are lost men, and will no longer possess the privilege of dying with those dearest to you. The enemy, who has no hope but that of taking you alive, is not all-powerful enough to prevent your escaping by voluntary death. You cannot resist him; you know that God himself has declared against us, and abandoned the Jewish nation, which he has ceased to love. Had we not been accursed and condemned, do you think he would have permitted the destruction of the Holy City? We, the last of our race, are crushed under his anger. This impregnable fortress, what protection has it afforded us? These warlike stores, these arms—what have we been able to achieve with them? Nothing. The flame which threatened our enemies has turned back upon ourselves; is it not the vengeance of Heaven that has vanquished us? If we have guilt to expiate, let not the Romans have the satisfaction of being the instruments of Divine wrath; let us become ourselves the instruments. Our wives will escape outrage; our children will avoid servitude; after

we have killed them, let us kill each other; we shall thus preserve our liberty and win a glorious sepulture. Let us first destroy our treasures and the fortress, to defeat the cupidity of these Romans. Let us leave them nothing but the provisions, to show that we have not yielded to famine, but have preferred death to slavery.

"Such were the words of Eleazar; and those who listened were not all inclined to follow his proposal. Some prepared to adopt, without hesitating, a resolution so heroic. Those who wavered, were moved by pity for their wives and children, and, seeing their death so near, looked on each other with tearful eyes, and showed, by their expressive silence, that they rejected the advice of their commander. Eleazar, observing this, began to fear that even those who had applauded his speech, might allow themselves to be softened by the supplications and tears of the more timid. He therefore repeated his exhortations with increasing energy. He spoke of a glorious immortality, and fixed his eyes in stern reproof on those who wept and trembled.

"By this second appeal he succeeded in inflaming them to such enthusiasm," (if we are to believe Josephus,) "that all, without exception, interrupted him with loud exclamations of fanatic frenzy, seeming to be instigated by demoniac excitement, and hurried to the fearful sacrifice, as if each dreaded to be anticipated by his companions. They were seen to embrace their wives and children with convulsive tenderness, and the next moment to stab them with unshrinking hands. There was no hesitation, no exception. The horrible necessity to which they were impelled was felt to be a release from greater miseries.

"This scene of carnage finished, the perpetrators, overwhelmed with horror, and longing to rejoin in death the victims they had slaughtered, heaped up their riches in an enormous pile, which they consumed by fire. Ten were chosen by lot to kill the rest, who, taking in their arms the lifeless bodies of their wives and children, presented their throats to the selected executioners. The ten achieved their task without flinching; and then a second lot decided that one of their own number should slay his nine companions, and lastly immolate himself. The solitary survivor examined all the bodies stretched around him, and, when convinced that none required his further ministry, he fired the palace, and fell on his own sword.

"All perished with the conviction that not a single living being remained to grace the triumph of the Romans. But they deceived themselves. An aged woman, with one of Eleazar's female relatives (distinguished by her knowledge and wisdom), and five children, contrived to conceal themselves in a subterranean aqueduct, where they were unthought of, and unsought for, in the hurry and agony of the moment. The assassins of Masada perished thus, to the number of nine hundred and sixty, including women and children. This happened on the fifteenth of the month of Xantichus.

"At dawn of day the Romans, prepared for a deadly conflict, issued from their intrenchments, planted their scaling-ladders, and rushed to the assault. They encountered not a single opponent. Nothing but solitude, silence, and devouring flames in every direction. They were still far from suspecting what had happened, and

with one voice sent up a mighty shout, to unmask, if possible, their hidden enemies. The terrified women crawled from their concealment, and the kinswoman of Eleazar related what had happened, with all its horrible details. At first, the Romans were incredulous, and refused belief to such an act of devoted patriotism, and having extinguished the fire, penetrated into the palace, where they discovered the long files of human bodies. They did not give vent to the joy of a victory obtained in the ardour of battle. The pride of conquest was checked by admiration of the heroic deed they could no longer doubt ; and they respected the sublime contempt for death by which so many noble-minded warriors had immortalised their fame for ever."

Such was the fate of men recorded by Josephus under the title of assassins. The annals of the world afford but few parallels.

For many years I had lost sight of the history of the Jewish war ; my studies had never led me back in that direction. I therefore visited Masada without any particular reminiscence. Besides, the name "Sebbeh," the only one which I heard pronounced by the Arabs, was not likely to refresh my memory ; and I confess, in all humility, that even if I had been aware that I was treading the soil of Masada, unprovided with books as I was in our adventurous expedition, it would have been quite impossible for me to recal the events which had given to this place such pre-eminent celebrity. Perhaps this may serve as a hint to future travellers, and if they do not prefer depriving themselves of the most exciting gratification, let them come prepared by previous reading before they enter on an exploring expedition. I shall

never cease to lament the unlucky ignorance which induced me to shorten our halt at Sebbeh, notwithstanding the impossibility of procuring water. If ever chance conducts me to the spot again, I shall not do as I have done this time, but, at whatever cost, I will bring back from Masada all that I can collect together in the shape of plans and drawings.

Now that I have digressed to the expedition of Flavius Silva, let me revert to the more pacific enterprise of which I happened to be myself the leader. Leaving our encampment in our rear, we direct our course towards the right bank of the large chasm which divides us from the mountain of Sebbeh. The ascent is steep, and the rocky fragments roll under our feet; but, everything considered, we have seen worse roads before. After some minutes' progress, the path becomes more difficult, and goats alone might be content with it, supposing they were not over-difficult to please. There can be no doubt we are moving on the perilous ledge called by Josephus "the Snake;" but I avouch, and my companions will scarcely gainsay me, that the historian of the Jews has described it in too flattering colours. It is one continual scaling-ladder, several hundred feet in perpendicular height, which increase when we think they are exhausted. If you venture a glance to the left, while on this picturesque ascent, beware of the vertigo, and a bottomless abyss which threatens you with a kind of fatal fascination. We determine, therefore, to look only to the right as we go up; going down we shall have the variety of looking to the left, which will be some consolation. Loysel soon finds this kind of promenade rather unpleasant; he therefore sits down quietly on a rocky point, lights

his pipe, and enters in his note-book, "*January* 11*th.*—*Excursion to Sebbeh.*" Papigny joins him, and it is only a few hundred feet higher up, when we venture to cast a look behind us, that we become aware that two of the troop have parted company, without even wishing us *bon voyage*.

Edward, Belly, Rothschild, and Philippe are the only members of our band who have persevered, and we follow, panting and out of breath, our three Bedouins who seem to be treading a royal high-road. Pride will not permit us to yield to difficulties which seem trifles to these iron savages of the desert, and we rush recklessly forward. At last we reach a platform pre-eminently rugged and narrow at first, rent by a chasm bearing away to the north-west. But the area soon becomes wider, and we find ourselves encircled by fragments of walls, and heaps of other ruins, unquestionable evidences of ancient habitations.

To our left the crest of the precipice is protected by a wall of dry stones, heaped up without order, and this wall dips rapidly, with the rock that bears it, to the bottom of the chasm, on the northern side of which we have left our camp. There is no mistaking the locality; it is the spot which Josephus calls Leuké. To our left begins *the Snake*, the path we have just followed, leading down to the Dead sea. Behind us must be the western path, with the tower which intersected it, as both roads met at this point. Unfortunately our time is limited, and the remains of Silva's camp (placed on this very spot, and on the ruins of the lower town, where Simon, the son of Joras, resided), conceal from our sight the vestiges of this tower, situated most likely much further down, as well as the path itself, which we have no intention of investigating.

When facing eastward, we have before us the perpendicular rock of Masada, two hundred feet in height, on the smoothly scarped side of which appear a few excavations, resembling those of a necropolis, and placed about fifty feet below the summit, without any protuberant stones or steps by which we might be enabled to reach them. There could have been no access but by subterraneous passages from the interior of the fortress.

A ridge, as narrow as the blade of a knife, leads along the top of an artificial causeway, made of light earth. This causeway, uniting Leuké to the side of the rock of Masada, is all that remains of Silva's mound. The platform by which it was surmounted has crumbled down by the action of time and the rains on the soft soil which formed the foundations. The stones have all rolled over into the precipices on either side, and there remains now no passage but this dangerous ridge before us, which we must adventure on like rope-dancers, without even the advantage of a balancing-pole.

In a few seconds we have crossed the abyss, and here we are, hanging on to the side of the rock of Masada. Another desperate escalade is before us, and fifty feet higher up we reach the remains of a flight of stairs, on the side of the precipice, and on the ruins of a buttress, built of fine freestone.

At last we gain the summit, and a small remnant of a path, enclosed between the precipice on one side and the ruins of a freestone wall on the other, leads us to a well-preserved gate of beautiful workmanship, with an ogival (pointed) arch. The invention of this form of arch is thus carried back to the epoch of Herod the Great, or at the very latest, to that of Titus and the destruction of Masada.

On the stones of this gate have been scratched, with some sharp instrument, at a period impossible to determine,

GATEWAY AT MASADA.

crosses, signs resembling the symbol of the planet Venus ♀, and Greek letters, such as Δ and T. Are these the marks of the stone-cutter? I doubt it; because, though rudely executed, they have not a very ancient appearance, and their light colour is not accordant with the darker tint of the stone. But as some are upright whilst others are inclined, and even reversed, this may seem to corroborate the opinion that they are merely to be considered as the symbols of the builders. For myself, I leave the question to the decision of others.

Beyond this gate, a level space appears before us: it is the platform of Masada. Thank Heaven! we have reached it with sound limbs, and as we have not halted on the way, fifty minutes have sufficed to bring us from the camp to the spot on which we stand.

The crest we have attained, I mean the western one, is furnished with buildings looking towards the platform, and resting against the surrounding wall. These struc-

tures are mostly square cells, in tolerable preservation, with many small apertures, disposed angularly, like the holes in a pigeon-house. Before us, within a hundred yards, is a ruin, which resembles a church with a circular apsis. Our Bedouins inform me that this is the Qasr, or Palace. I hasten to examine it. The principal chamber is terminated by this oven-like apsis, with one small round window. The whole is constructed of fine freestone, elaborately worked; the supporting walls are covered with a very hard plaster, inlaid with mosaic work of a novel description.* It consists of thousands of small red fragments of broken pottery fixed in the mortar, and forming regular designs. These are the only ornaments of this hall. Some small detached cubes of red, white, and black stone induce me to suppose that the hall is paved with real mosaic; I therefore tempt my Bedouins with the promise of a bakhshish, and whilst I am drawing the plans of the different apartments, and Belly is engaged in taking a sketch of this extraordinary ruin, the rubbish is cleared from the floor, and a handsome mosaic pavement, disposed in circular knots, is brought once more to light. Unfortunately all is broken in pieces; I feel, therefore, no scruple in carrying away some specimens. We also take designs of several fragments of moulding in white marble, and pick up samples of the pieces of red pottery and glass with which the ground is covered. No time is lost by any of us; Edward makes a survey of

* This kind of mosaic is seen nearly everywhere in eastern countries,—I mean in the large cities,—and is of very ancient use. Only, instead of broken pottery, the mosaic work is generally made of pieces of looking-glass, or of earthen and china vessels, quite whole, of all sizes and descriptions, firmly stuck into the wall; for instance, in the *Sheesh* or *China Muhuls* of the natives of India.—TRANSLATOR.

the gate at the entrance, whilst Belly and I are working at our plans.

When our sketches are finished, we explore the entire platform. Starting from the Qasr, which stands exactly east of the original entrance, and moving in a northerly direction, we find a large rectangular cistern, containing of course no water, and entirely overgrown with thorns. Further on, to the north-east of the Qasr, is a quadrangular enclosure, of much more ancient style than the Qasr and the other buildings. A wide deep ditch divides it from the remainder of the platform, and begins from the left flank of a square ruined tower, which commands the entire ground, and is situated about the middle of the face opposite the palace. We ascend this tower, and obtain a full view of the interior of the oldest portion of the fortress; marked, in the direction from south to north, by continuous lines and heaps of large, black, irregular stones, remains of buildings that have crumbled down where they were erected. I have no doubt that this enclosure constituted the original Masada built by Jonathan, according to Josephus. All the remainder is the work of Herod the Great.

Some of the walls are built with large cut stones, fastened together by smaller ones, instead of mortar. The same style of building is to be found in the cisterns of Jerusalem and El-Bireh. Looking towards the east, I mean in the direction of the Dead Sea, there are no traces of defences as solid and as carefully constructed as those which protect the platform of Leuké. The reason is obvious: there was no dread of attack on this side, where nothing but birds could ascend by the direct way. Nevertheless, a circle of ruined walls entirely surrounds the crest of the platform of Masada.

From the brink on which we are standing we can discover very plainly, and judge the surprising state of preservation, of the besieging works constructed under the orders of Silva. Nothing is easier than to describe the entire plan. Four square redoubts command—one the chasm on the left, and the three others the Ouad-el-Hafaf (valley of the ruins). Beginning from these posts, which are connected by a curtain made of stones and pebbles, two other retrenchments, of the same construction, enclose the rock of Masada, as it were, between the branches of a pair of tongs. These lines of circumvallation are of great extent, taking in without interval the left flank of the mountain of Sebbeh, as well as that of the lofty eminence opposite Masada, on the other side of the Ouad-el-Hafaf. The last line in all probability terminated at the camp of Silva, as I have verified the fact with regard to the line on the left.

The platform contains no other structures beyond those we have mentioned—viz. towards the northern point, the palace, and a cistern; and towards the south, another cistern and a mass of ruins, belonging perhaps to a barrack. On the southern side of the rock are a well and a vault, lined throughout with a hard and smooth cement. To reach this vault a serious danger must be encountered, as you are literally suspended over the Ouad-el-Hafaf, which is more than twelve hundred feet below, and the only entrance is by a few steps almost impracticable. It would be difficult not to identify it. In this vault we readily recognise one of the subterranean magazines in which the provisions had been accumulated, which could be preserved in Masada for centuries without spoiling. On our way we passed another reservoir, or rather a well; then returning

to the northern side, where the entrance gate is situated, we have accomplished indifferently the entire circuit of the fortress. But deeply do I regret our hurried examination of this celebrated place: two days actively employed would scarcely have sufficed to make us thoroughly acquainted with Masada.

We had spent more than two hours on the platform. Our Arabs were impatient to return to camp, strongly urging the necessity of shifting our quarters to a spot where men and beasts might be supplied with water. This argument, backed by the intense heat, prevailed over our enthusiastic love of ruins. We prepared to encounter the descent, and it was only in retracing our steps by the same road that we were able to estimate the full dangers of an excursion to Masada.

On passing the narrow ravine which opens on Leuké, the youngest of our Djahalins fortunately entered to search for water in some crevice between the rocks; suddenly he sent forth the joyous shout *fih maieh!*—(there is water!) and all rush madly towards him. One must have endured thirst in such a country to conceive the delight with which we plunged our heads into this dirty reservoir, to quaff as much as we could gorge. Frenchmen and Bedouins, lying at full length round the stagnant pool, drank to repletion, immersing their heads and arms without caring in the least how they might annoy their neighbours. Our affected exquisites should try a short experiment of life in the desert to cure them of delicate refinements. Invigorated by this unexpected refreshment, we resumed our march with fresh energy; and by half-past ten o'clock we returned to camp, or rather to the place where our camp had been, for the tents were struck, and all our baggage had gone

on in advance, to spare our beasts of burthen, and reach as soon as possible the fresh spring of water, promised for this evening's halting ground.

Matteo had long prepared our breakfast, to which it may be supposed we did full credit. Our infantry had marched with the luggage; our Scheikhs and horsemen were sitting composedly in a circle, and chatting, under a burning sun, with their horses tied close by to the poles of their lances. Hamdan had returned, during our absence, from the excursion he had undertaken to the mountains, with the object of procuring a couple of sheep. The worthy venders had asked him a hundred piastres for each. As he was not the man to adopt expedient measures on preposterous terms, he preferred returning without his errand, rather than submitting to see us imposed upon. No doubt he had reason on his side, but it is not always convenient to be reasonable in the desert, and to haggle in a bargain, when you are in want of provisions, which you hunt after for two whole days without the certainty of finding them. However, we had to submit to our disappointment, and thanked the Scheikh of the Thâameras for his economical consideration of our finances.

On our arrival, Abou-Daouk, after the usual salutations and compliments, advised us to get on expeditiously with our breakfast, that we might reach our encamping ground before dark. We require no additional hint, and swallowing our viands in double-quick time, are soon ready to mount. I freely acknowledge my delight at finding myself once more in the saddle. What at any other time would have been fatigue, after the march to Masada appeared like voluptuous repose.

One word more about Masada before resuming our

itinerary. The ruins—the celebrity of which I think I have clearly demonstrated—have been very seldom visited by Europeans. Messrs. Robinson and Smith, the first who instinctively identified Sebbeh with Masada, only looked on that locality from the heights of Aÿn-Djedy ; that is to say, they contemplated from a distance of several leagues, the profile of the mountain upon which Masada once stood. Trusting to the details derived from the Arabs they had an opportunity of consulting, with admirable perspicacity they have given a description as clear as if it had been founded on personal investigation. Their account bears date Friday, the 11th of May, 1838.

Four years later, from the 12th to the 15th of March, 1842, Messrs. Wolcott (an American missionary) and Tipping (an English painter), were the first to scale the ascent of Masada, and to verify the conjectural statement of Messrs. Robinson and Smith. Mr. Robinson, in the book entitled "The Biblical Cabinet,"* has published two interesting letters, written, the one from Sebbeh, the other from Jerusalem, by Mr. Wolcott, and in which that zealous traveller gives in full detail the narrative of his visit to Masada. He has correctly observed all the remarkable points, identified the different structures mentioned by Josephus, and recognised the besieging works constructed by Silva. Mr. Wolcott is of opinion that all the remains still visible at Masada are of the same period, that is, of the epoch of King Herod ; but he considers the gate leading into the town as a modern ruin. The presence of a modern ruin in Masada would certainly be a more extraordinary fact than the existence of the

* Vol. xliii. p. 67, and following.

ogival arch in the days of Herod. The fortress of Jonathan is too distinctly defined to be the subject of argument; but a few exceptional opinions on minor points cannot take from Mr. Wolcott the merit of having been the first to explore the time-honoured ruins of Masada.

There is one thing with which I must reproach the reverend American missionary: namely, that he amused himself by rolling to the bottom of the rock several stones dragged from the ruins of the fortress. The American naval expedition, as we shall perceive, indulged in the same pastime. It is fortunate that travellers are scarce in Masada; for if they all gave way to the same fancy, the ruins of the Jewish citadel would soon have to be sought for twelve hundred feet below their present elevation.

On Saturday, the 29th of April, 1848, at day-break, Captain Lynch, commanding the American expedition, detached from Aÿn-Djedy, where he was encamped, Messrs. Dale, Anderson, and Bedlow, with a dragoman, a Turkish soldier, and some Arab guides, with commission to explore the ruins of Sebbeh. By sunset these gentlemen returned, and after comparing their different reports, Captain Lynch published a narrative of their excursion.

As we are now treating of a most interesting spot, on the present state of which we cannot have too much information, I think it appropriate to reprint this narrative; the correctness of which is greatly to be commended, as I can certify from my own visit three years later to the same places described by the American officers. Here is the extract:—

"A little after eight o'clock they came to Wady-Sebbeh, and discovered a distinct road, fifteen feet wide and marked by two parallel rows of stones, which continued, with interruptions, for the space of a quarter of a mile.* At nine o'clock, when the heat of the sun began to be oppressive, they reached a low cave in the southern face of the mountain, over Wady-Seyâl,—a deep ravine, which separated the cliff from the main ridge on the north; here they dismounted, as it was impossible to proceed further on horseback. Thence, sometimes upon their hands and knees, they clambered up the steep and rugged cliff—its perpendicular sides pierced with apertures, like the rock of Gibraltar. They were inclined to believe that the path by which they ascended is the one which Josephus calls the Serpent, as resembling that animal in its narrowness and perpetual windings; for it is broken off at the prominent precipices of the rock, and returns frequently into itself, and lengthening again by little and little, hath much to do to proceed forward, and he that would walk along it must first go on one leg and then on the other: there is also nothing but destruction in case your feet slip, for on each side there is a vastly deep chasm and precipice.

"They crossed the ravine upon a chalky ridge, which, although considerably below the highest point of the cliff, yet connects the southern steep of Seyâl with the northern

* I did not observe this road marked with stones, because we took another path. Indeed, the American officers, having travelled on the mountain side, all the way from the Ouad-el-Seyal, which is more than a league distant from the rock of Sebbeh, must have marched from north to south towards Masada. Did they follow the road which Josephus calls *the Serpent*? Or is the one by which we ascended entitled to that name? I leave to others the decision of this point. It appears very probable that they must have fallen in with our goat track, as there is no other approach from the Dead Sea to Masada.

escarpment of Masada, and reached the top a little before 10, A.M. The whole summit was surrounded by the ruins of a wall, built on the brink of the precipice.

"Passing through a gateway with a pointed arch—the keystone and arch of which were of hewn stone, curiously marked with Greek delta-shaped figures, Δ, and others resembling the planetary symbol of Venus, ♀; some upright and some reverted; and others again with rude crosses and the unfinished letter T—they came upon an area of about three-fourths of a mile in length from north to south, and one-fourth of a mile from east to west.

"There was very little vegetation, except in the bottoms of a few excavations, which seemed to have been used as cisterns or granaries, and which were half filled with a rank weed and a species of lichen. Elsewhere the earth was as sterile as if sown with salt; yet Herod spoke of it as being 'of a fat soil, and better mould than any valley for agriculture.' Concerning these excavations, Josephus says—'Herod also had cut many and great pits, as reservoirs for water, out of the rocks, at every one of the places that were inhabited, both above and around the palace and before the wall; and by this contrivance he endeavoured to have water for several uses, as if there had been fountains there.'*

"Towards the northern and western edge of the cliff, and near the point which is probably the 'White Promontory' mentioned by Josephus,† they observed one of these excavations, of considerable extent, much choked

* I do not undertake to guarantee the correctness of the translation of Josephus given by Capt. Lynch.—AUTHOR.

† Leukè was at more than two hundred feet below the area of Masada. There appears to be some confusion of places in this part of Capt. Lynch's narrative.

with the ruins and rubbish of its own cemented walls, together with the decomposed thistles and rank weeds of many centuries.

"In the south-west corner of the rock they found one still larger, finely stuccoed, with a gallery,* a flight of forty stone steps, and lighted by two windows on the southern face of the cliff. This large room was beautifully stuccoed with pebbles, and as smooth and clean as if just finished. This excavated chamber led them to infer that there were numerous others, lighted by the apertures of the cliff they had seen outside on their ascent; but they could find no access to them.

"At the distance of about one hundred feet below the northern summit, on an inaccessible precipitous ledge, they saw the ruins of a round tower; and at about forty or fifty feet lower still, on another ledge, the foundations of a square enclosure, with a triangular wall abutting with the angles of its base upon the wall of the circular tower, and the west side of the enclosure. They found it impossible to descend to examine these ruins.

"Besides the remains of the round tower, or donjon-keep, there were on the summit the fragments of walls with circular recesses of tesselated brick-work, arched door-ways, and mullioned windows, partly surrounding an enclosure which was, perhaps, the courtyard or quadrangle of the castle, now filled with rubbish, fragments of marble, mosaic, and pottery.

"The foundations and lower portions of the wall, built around the entire top of the hill by Herod, are still

* If it be the same excavation which I myself visited, my memory is very defective; for of the forty steps here mentioned, I can only recollect four or five at the utmost. Besides, these gentlemen mention a cave, quite different, at the very same spot. I much fear there is another misunderstanding.

remaining on the eastern side. The officers amused themselves by displacing some of the stones, rolling them over the cliff, and watching them as they whirled and bounded to the base, upwards of twelve hundred feet below, with more fearful velocity than the stones hurled from the Roman ballistæ, when Silva pressed the siege.

"One of the windows, apparently a remnant of a chapel, looked out upon the sea. It was the one resembling an arch which we saw when passing in the boats. Thence the sea could be seen throughout its whole extent, its northern and southern extremity clearly defined, even through the haze which overhung them. The configuration of the peninsula lay distinctly before them, and bore some resemblance to an expanded wing.

"Immediately below them, along the base of the cliff, could be traced the wall of circumvallation constructed by Silva on the exterior, surrounding the whole place, and by which he effectually blocked up all attempt at escape on the part of the besieged.

"Continuing their researches towards the southern and eastern edge of the cliff, they followed a perilous track along the face of the rock, which could not have been less than a thousand feet in perpendicular height above the chasm, and came upon an extensive shelf or platform, encumbered with masses of rubbish and masonry, evidently the ruins of the wall which edged the cliff above. Scrambling over the heaps, they reached an excavation called by the Arab guide a cistern, which is probably correct, for in descending they saw narrow troughs or aqueducts, the inner half scooped in the rock; the whole forming an oblong cell, measuring thirty feet in length,

fifteen in breadth, and eighteen or twenty in depth, cemented on all sides. At the entrance of this excavation they saw the carcase of an animal recently killed. It resembled a rabbit, and was called by the Arabs 'webr' or 'webeh,' the *coney* of Scripture. To the left of the entrance, and within the cell, was a small flight of steps terminating in a platform. Like the walls, the steps were coated with cement. Above was an aperture not accessible by the steps, which they contrived to reach by making notches in the wall. It was the entrance of a low cave, roughly hewn in the rock, with a window looking out upon the steep face of Wady Senîn. Around the rough and uncemented walls were rude crosses in red paint, and upon the dust of the floor were the fresh foot-prints of the 'whal' or 'bteddin.'*

"They attempted to explore the southern face of the mountain by following the zigzag path along the ledge, projecting a few feet from the rough surface of rock; but found it impracticable, from the looseness of the stones and the fearful dizzy depth below.

"On their return, they observed a singular ruin about the centre of the quadrangle. The square blocks of stone, cemented together with great regularity, were cellular on both sides, and so abraded by the weather, as to present the appearance of a honey-comb. They supposed it to have been either a storehouse or barrack. Before descending, they sketched the sea, and took many bearings.

"On their return to the cave, the Arabs asked them if their visit had been productive. These people believe that we come here to search for treasure, or to visit

* Captain Lynch probably means a beden or antelope.

places we consider holy. In the Wady Seyâl (ravine of acacias) were many acacia-trees.

"On their return, they noticed a fetid, sulphureous smell in passing Berket-el-Khalil (the tank of Khalil).

"This report confirms the supposition of Messrs. Robinson and Smith, that the ruins of Sebbeh are those of Masada. At every stage in our route, where these gentlemen have been, we found that accurate and learned observers had preceded us; and in these precursors, with no little satisfaction, we recognised our own countrymen."

Such is Captain Lynch's narrative. Our readers may see that it agrees sufficiently with what we have ourselves observed. I must remark only, that it is not exactly just to attribute to Messrs. Robinson and Smith (so rich already in their own discoveries) the honour of having been the first to visit the ruins of Masada. That honour belongs unquestionably to Messrs. Wolcott and Tipping: the officers despatched to Sebbeh by Captain Lynch were the next; and with reasonable pride we find ourselves the third party who have braved this perilous expedition.

It is high time now to resume the Diary of our journey, though I need scarcely apologise for the length of the digression on so celebrated a place as the Jewish fortress of Masada.

By twenty minutes past eleven we are on horseback, and leave our last night's encamping ground. After one turning, which takes us to the brink of the ravine extending all the way to the right flank of the hill of Sebbeh, we march directly south-south-east. That ravine diverges into a fork towards the mountain, and forms,

beginning at the spot where we cross it, a small triangular area, occupied by one of the square stone redoubts constructed by Flavius Silva to defend the weak points of his line of circumvallation. Opposite the eastern angle of the redoubt, and on the corresponding crest of the ravine, there still exists a wall of dry stones, extending to the south, and joining three other square redoubts, which mutually flank each other, and cover the opening of the Ouad-el-Hafaf (valley of ruins). From the southern angle of the first redoubt the line of circumvallation continues, and leads directly up the side of the mountain until it rejoins on the Leuké the site of Silva's camp.

By twenty-five minutes past eleven we have passed the ravine, and two minutes later cross the line of circumvallation, which bears away from the direction we are following by the foot of the Sebbeh, to approach it again shortly, and run for some time in a parallel direction. The sea is about three thousand yards distant to our left, and the sandy hillocks which bear such an extraordinary resemblance to the ruins of a large city, lie between us and the beach, commencing at three hundred yards from the road. The foot of the mountain itself is scarcely fifty yards from our right.

By thirty minutes past eleven we reach the bank of a wide and precipitous ravine, about fifteen yards in depth. This is the Ouad-el-Hafaf. At the spot where we cross stands another Roman redoubt, connected by the line of circumvallation with the first redoubt we have already recognised. The whole mass is thrown down outwardly to the left of the line of wall, which rejoins the face again by the north-west angle. From the other extremity of the same face begins a portion

of the intrenchment cresting the brink of the Ouad-el-Hafaf for twenty or thirty yards, and ascending towards the besieged fortress. It then turns off to the south and crosses the Ouad, in which there still remains, close to the left bank, a portion of wall more solidly and more carefully erected than the rest of the line, of which it formed a portion. Facing this, and on the opposite bank, commencing again from the crest, we trace distinctly the mass of rough stones forming the line of circumvallation until it reaches the north-east angle of a redoubt somewhat smaller than the others. From the north-west angle of this third redoubt an enormous branch of the line runs directly up the side of the lofty eminence which commands the right bank of the Ouad-el-Hafaf and faces the hill at Sebbeh. The small redoubt is only a few yards from the right of our road, while on our left, at a distance of twenty yards, appears a much larger one, square like the rest, and provided on its southern and eastern faces with two arched entrances. This was evidently the head quarters of all the posts established by Silva to protect and strengthen his line of attack from the shores of Lake Asphaltites.

By thirty-seven minutes past eleven we have left behind us the Ouad-el-Hafaf, and proceed along the flank of the mountain facing Sebbeh, at a distance of fifty yards from the first acclivities, and at the same distance from the nearest sandy hillocks situated on our left, which form a continuation of those already noticed. Two thousand yards to the left we descry the further end of one of the gulfs of the Dead Sea. Our direction leads us gradually from the foot of the mountains and brings us nearer to the sand-hills.

We next march through a plain furrowed with hollow trenches. By twelve o'clock we are two hundred and fifty yards distant from, and in face of, a deep rent in the hill side, occasioned by a waterfall which rushes down occasionally, but not often, during the season of the heavy rains. A deep and wide ravine forms the outlet of this cascade. We soon incline eastward, and approach still nearer to the sea shore. By eleven minutes past twelve we are opposite the southern point of the mountain along the flank of which we have been marching since we passed the Ouad-el-Hafaf, and we observe, a thousand yards in advance, the entrance of a very large valley which the Bedouins all agree in calling again Ouad-el-Hafaf. This double use of the same name puzzles me. I again question our informants as to the correct name of the Ouad defended by Silva's redoubt. They still answer, Ouad-el-Hafaf, and I must content myself perforce with this repetition. This proves the necessity of receiving with due caution the names given by the Bedouins to localities which they pass through seldom, and at distant intervals ; and the designations of which may get jumbled in their memories, especially when these localities are near each other. Captain Lynch mentions an Ouad-Sebbeh, which I have not found ; but as an equivalent I have discovered two Ouads-el-Hafaf. The first may very probably be the Ouad-Sebbeh of my predecessors. Let me relieve my conscience by declaring that I used every endeavour to clear this point of nomenclature, which, to my great regret, I am still obliged to leave in the dark.

Before a quarter past twelve we enter the hollow bed of the Ouad, and follow it for some time, taking our

course nearly due east. At intervals the right bank which we follow is cut like a perpendicular wall, six or eight yards high. In the bed of the torrent are some half-buried trunks of trees, rooted up and carried along, Heaven knows when, by the flood of waters in the rainy season. Some fine acacias and clumps of tamarisks occasionally adorn the bottom of the Ouad-el-Hafaf. By twenty-two minutes past twelve we turn our backs upon the mountains of Canâan, and leave them at a distance of about two thousand yards. At this moment we are facing a point of the shore not more than two or three hundred yards off, and which seems to be divided from the opposite cape of the peninsula of El-Lisan by less than three quarters of a mile.

By thirty-two minutes past twelve another watercourse opens to our right, the entrance to which is concealed by a small hill. The mountain on the southern bank of this Ouad is not quite so high as those along the Ouad-el-Hafaf; it inclines directly from north to south, so that its axis nears rapidly the direction of our route, which now bears south-west. Here the shore of the Dead Sea is one hundred and twenty yards to our left, and the mountain side three hundred yards to our right. Between forty and fifty minutes past twelve we cross six tolerably deep watercourses, indenting a plain covered again by those strange-looking sand-hills we have already noticed more than once.

In such a wild country one might expect to find game; at least so thinks our friend Belly, who rides on the flank of our caravan, gun in hand, ready for action. This seems to us a superfluous precaution, considering that game could find here absolutely nothing to feed upon,

the Dead Sea, at the northern point, is atrociously bitter and salt, but it is lemonade in comparison with what we so rashly tasted at Rabath-el-Djamous.

I have mentioned the various qualities of the Nubian in Rothschild's retinue, and amongst these, the reader may remember that greediness held the first rank. We are cruel enough to play off a school-boy's trick on our sable Pierrot. We offer him the bottle out of which he has seen us all drinking from a distance, saying, "Drink, Selim; 'tis arrack." The poor devil swallows at once a huge bumper with an eagerness upon which we had fully reckoned. I have never seen anything to compare with his face a moment after; he makes grimaces and contortions like a lunatic; and it is only by giving him a piece of an orange that we succeed in consoling him for having allowed himself to be entrapped into the very bitter joke we have so remorselessly perpetrated. We tell him too, that we have all been poisoned like himself; he then forgives the trick, and joins in the laugh at his own mishap.

From twenty-six to thirty-one minutes past one we climb to the top of the Redjom-es-Senîn, and reach the crest; from which we discover to our right a high cliff, bordering a large ravine or watercourse, with two arms, both of which we cross in a quarter of an hour; this is the Ouad-omm-el-Bedoun (the mother-valley of the antelopes). Here the mountain is one hundred and fifty yards to our right, and the shore five hundred to our left. Our route is then tending south-south-east. We proceed along a beach formed of small gravel, very similar to that of Rabath-el-Djamous. Before us is a scorched and broken mountain, which we must clamber

over: it is called the Djebel-Hatroura. By fifty-one minutes past one we begin the ascent; at two o'clock we reach the crest; and by three minutes past two we descend again upon the other side. A more repulsive-looking mountain cannot be conceived: its flank, rapidly inclining and dipping into the Dead Sea, is a perfect chaos of huge blocks violently rent and overthrown. We are evidently in the vicinity of a volcano; and by twenty-six minutes past two we reach a bed of lava, coming from the west, and resembling a hollow filled with melted iron, formed of concentric layers. Until half-past two we keep winding up and down the side of the mountain, through rocks dislocated by the action of centuries. The real descent commenced then, and in a few minutes more we clear the Ouad-Hatroura, ending in an immense crater encumbered with detached rocks. By forty minutes past two we are opposite the southern limit of this crater.

We then find ourselves again upon the beach, at a very short distance (about fifty yards) from the shore and in a plain nearly eight hundred yards in breadth, well sprinkled with high sandy hillocks, which lie between us and the mountains. At forty-seven minutes past two we turn south-south-west, and then again almost immediately west-south-west, and keep marching in this last direction until three o'clock. We wind at a distance of about two hundred yards along the foot of a high mountain, with its axis parallel to our route. The distance from the shore varies but little, between twenty and forty yards only, until fifty-six minutes past two. Here the beach widens rapidly, to the extent of five hundred yards: this is again a delta, formed by the

gravel brought down by a torrent coming from the Ouad, which we discover before us.

Two hundred yards to our right, and about fifty yards higher up than our road, on the mountain side, we perceive a thicket of acacias and reeds, occasioned by the presence of a spring; but the Arabs tell us that the water is brackish and not fit to drink. A little further on before us is a small hillock, surmounted by a square ruin, built of fine hewn stone; this proves to be a small fort of ancient structure, called now-a-days Qalaat-Embarrheg. By three o'clock, exactly, we are at the foot of this hillock, which is scarcely twenty yards distant to our right. Masses of rubbish and masonry, spread over a very large surface, surround the Qalaat. Such ruins ought to be carefully examined; but our most urgent affairs for this evening are to find water to drink, and to overtake our luggage. Judging from the manner in which our Scheikhs have hurried the day's march, we suspect that we are still at a considerable distance from our proposed encamping ground.

Along the foot of the Qalaat-Embarrheg runs a ravine twenty yards deep, which we cross, shaping our course then due west: this Ouad is about fifty yards wide. Some hundred yards further on we turn south again, and find ourselves by seven minutes past three in the centre of an extensive area, closed in on all sides by perpendicular cliffs, rising even out of sight. Here our tents are pitched: our horses, quite refreshed, are greedily devouring the reeds they are so fond of; our kitchen is already established, and all our people have assumed a joyous mien. It is easy to perceive we have here an unlimited supply of fresh water. This valley is, in fact,

called Ouad-el-Maïet-Embarrheg (the valley of the water of Embarrheg).

On the western bank, flanking the area upon which we have pitched our camp, several lines of wall, regularly built, and of chiselled materials, are hanging some ten or fifteen yards above the level of the ground. What could have been the object of these walls? I cannot comprehend. Asking information from the Arabs, and trying to get out of them anything beyond the names of the places, is mere loss of time and labour. At Sebbeh, the redoubts of Silva, according to Hamdan, were merely "Maqbourat-il-Belad" ("the burying-grounds of the place)." Here at Embarrheg, just as at Aÿn-Djedy, the ruins are all—gardens: so much for our local authorities.

Once alighted, after having looked in wonder for some moments on the extraordinary, rectangular, *sky-roofed* hall in which we are lodged, apparently without egress, I inquire from the Arabs where they have found the reeds and the water. They point out the southern extremity, saying, "Hin!" ("There!") I could almost think they were joking with me, had I not before my eyes abundant proofs to the contrary. The wisest plan is to go and see. We do so, and the reader can imagine our surprise when, on arriving at the bottom of our inclosure, we discover, in a westerly direction, an opening eight or ten yards wide, teeming with reeds, many trees of ten different species, and various creeping plants interlacing and twining round them all. The delightful murmur of water running over pebbles is heard a few yards off; it is the sound of a fresh and limpid rivulet, flowing gently down to lose itself in the finest sand, at the exact spot where you enter this picturesque cleft. Another noise, different from the

murmur of the water, resounds through the thicket; the merry song of our Bedouins, the repeated blows of their yataghans upon the trees and rushes, and the crash of both as they fall to the ground. Other Arabs are drinking, and performing the ablutions of which they have been balked since we left Aÿn-Djedy. This example is too tempting not to be followed by our whole party.

Belly and Loysel commence sketching; Edward, Rothschild, and I, begin our search for insects and plants, and, until darkness drives us from this enchanting spot we forget that our dinner is waiting for us. At last we return to the camp, where I have a long conversation with Abou-Daouk. Until now the brave Scheikh had been dissuading us from passing along the eastern shore of the Bahr-Louth, and hinted plainly enough that he had not the slightest inclination to accompany us in that direction. This evening he has changed his mind, and is now ready to attend us with his people wherever we may choose to go. Of course we are highly pleased to find our long-cherished hopes likely to be realised. I attribute the Scheikh's present zeal in our service to the fact of my having cured his ophthalmia. When I advised him to use some Regent's ointment, I had warned him that during the two first days it would increase his sufferings, but that he would find himself better afterwards. My prediction has proved true; the inflammation disappears, and Abou-Daouk, who has the greatest desire to obtain from me the little box containing the unguent that has cured him, is ready to make any sacrifices in the world to achieve his object He dares not yet plainly make the demand, but it will come in due course;—I

have strangely miscalculated the Arab character if I am mistaken in my conclusion.

The evening passes delightfully ; joy sits round every fire ; chibouks, coffee and gossip are going on famously ; I have never before seen our camp so thoroughly merry. At Sebbeh we sang and danced, 'tis true, but we were thirsty. This evening we want nothing. Our people indulge their present happiness, careless of the future,—repose under the finest sky in the world, sheltered from every breeze, and have all they require in ample abundance.

Mirth is contagious ; it has possessed us all, and were it not for the fatigue consequent upon our hard morning's work at Sebbeh, we should be in no hurry to retire to our beds. But to-morrow we have a long march before us, and, as we are assured, a rough road to travel on. Let us then to rest, to be better prepared for the difficulties in store.

Abou-Daouk's brother has left us and gone on in advance to sound the dispositions of the wandering tribes whose country we have to pass through. Upon the answers that he brings back depends much of our future success. I have completed my day's work, and may at last, to my very great satisfaction, follow the general example and seek repose.

CHAPTER VII.

Castellum, or ruined fort.—Roman station.—Thamara of Eusebius.—Ruins and current of lava.—Salt morass.—Plain and mountain of Sodom.—Vestiges of ancient Sodom.—Pyramidal columns of salt.—Tribe of the Ahouethats.—The scheikh Sellam.—Sabkhah, or plain of the salt mud.—Encampment of the Ahouethats.—Suspicious friends.—Patriarchal hospitality.—A rapacious schiekh.—An expensive gift.—The tribe of Beni-Sakhars.—Robbers of a superior order.—Introduction.—Visit to their encampment.

January 12th.

THIS morning my first visit has been to the beautiful ravine we are about to leave, in all probability, for ever. It looks as fresh and smiling as it appeared yesterday. The world cannot produce a more attractive spot; no wonder, then, that we find extensive ruins to attest the presence of a military station near such a pure and abundant spring as that of El-Maïet-Embarrheg. On my return to camp, I find our tents struck and breakfast ready. As I am determined not to leave the place without a closer look at the Qalaat-Embarrheg, which I only glanced at from the road as we passed by, and as I wish to obtain some more information as to the nature and origin of this ancient relic, I hasten to mount my horse, taking with me my faithful Ahouad; and casting a last parting look of regret on the delightful glen, where we have found a shelter, I gallop to the ruins. I find a *castellum*, or small fort, built on a hillock, about fifty yards above the platform that forms the

right bank of the valley. This hillock abuts on the side of the mountain. The construction is similar to that of the piscina (or pool) at Bethesda, and of several walls in Masada; I mean that the successive rows of hewn stones are cemented together by other stone chips of a very small dimension.

The *castellum* is a parallelogram, the exterior sides of which, parallel with the direction of the Ouad, are four-and-twenty yards long; the two other faces being only eighteen yards broad. An opening with a circular arch, on the face looking towards the mountain, forms the entrance to the castellum. Another opening exists in the left-hand quarter of the opposite face. At each angle there is a bastion, or rather a square tower; the flanks of which are one yard in height above the connecting curtains, and the faces are four yards long. The base of the whole structure is covered with the broken fragments of the higher walls. The similitude between this military edifice and the defensive works of Masada render it impossible to trace the Qalaat-Embarrheg to any other period than that of the fortifications of the latter post completed by the orders of Herod the Great.

A circuit of heaped-up pebbles and rubbish, exactly similar to the circumvallation of Silva round Sebbeh, embraces the fort and hillock. Are these the advanced posts or the besieging trenches of the Romans? I cannot tell. As I had not leisure to examine the ground separating the castellum from the mountain, I could not decide whether these lines may be traced in that direction; though it is very probable in either case. On the opposite side of the Ouad are other remains of walls in fine cut stone, which have most likely constituted

additional works, uniting with the castellum to complete the defences of the Ouad-el-Maïet-Embarrheg.

Everything well considered, it seems to me a natural conclusion that we have here military works originally constructed by the Jews; at a later period taken possession of by the Romans, and then again used by the conquerors to strengthen so important a station as the locality of the best and most abudnant spring of fresh water on the road between the countries of Canâan and the Land of Moab. Let us now inquire if it is possible to find in history some traces of a Roman military post somewhere in the neighbourhood of this desirable supply —an advantage which such skilful warriors were not likely to neglect.

Eusebius, at the word Ἀσὰσανθαμάν, mentions a station named Thamara, with a Roman garrison, distant one day's march from Hebron, on the road to Aïla. The text of Eusebius, with regard to this locality, has unfortunately been corrupted, for it contains the word μάλις, (literally, a horse's cough), which evidently has no business there. Saint Jerome has understood this passage as I have just quoted it, but in his turn he has introduced the word Memphis, which is another mistake. Reland substitutes for the single word μάλις, the two words μαλάθων μόνης, which would give the meaning; "Distant one day's march from Malatha, on the road from Hebron to Aïla." It seems to me much more natural to replace the word μάλις by μόνης, which has the same number of letters, and clears the text of Eusebius. With this alteration, Thamara was one day's march from Hebron, going from that town to Aïla on the Red Sea. In a direct line this is exact, but which was the road followed? We have lost sight of it. By

whichever way you travel now, it would be a very long day's march from Hebron to Embarrheg, if Embarrheg is, as I believe, the Thamara of Eusebius. If the substitution proposed by Reland be sound, as Malatha was an Idumæan fortress,* situated in the southern territory of the tribe of Judah, at about twenty Roman miles from Hebron, it would be quite correct to say that Thamara (supposing it still to be identical with El-Maïet-Embarrheg) is distant one day's march from Malatha.

Ptolemy places in the lowest rank amongst the towns of Judæa one which he calls Thamaro: this is unquestionably the Thamara of Eusebius. I give the three last calculations, taken from Ptolemy. Εγγάδδα, $66\frac{1}{2}°$ and $31\frac{1}{4}°$; Βηδωρα, $66\frac{1}{2}°$ and $31°$; Θαμαρώ, $66\frac{1}{3}°$ and $30\frac{1}{2}\cdot\frac{1}{3}°$. Reland observes, quite correctly, that Ptolemy assigns precisely the same longitude and latitude to Thamaro and Καλγύια, a town in Arabia Petræa, and that consequently either one or the other of these two calculations is necessarily erroneous. If we construe the longitudes and latitudes as given by Ptolemy for Jerusalem, Engadda, and Thamaro, we fall again, for the situation of Thamaro, as near as possible, upon El-Maïet-Embarrheg.

In Peutinger's Table we find Thamaro placed as follows with regard to relative distances:†—From Raba-Bathora (otherwise Rabbath-Moab, or Rabbah) to Thamaro (otherwise Thamara, or Tell-el-Msoggal), lxviiii miles;‡ from thence to Jerusalem, liii miles. Colonel Lapie has placed Thamaro at Tell-el-Msoggal, in which we must recognise the Redjom-el-Mezorrhel, certainly situated on the site of

* Josephus, Ant. xvi. 2.

† See Collection of Itineraries, edited by M. Muller, A.D. 1845.

‡ The first edition has 68 instead of 69 miles.

Sodom. But this mistaken identification arises from the circumstance that the ruins of Embarrheg were unknown to the learned geographer ; for, if we carry back Thamara to this last point, the respective distances of lxviii or lxviiii miles from Er-Rabba to Embarrheg, and of liii miles from Embarrheg to Jerusalem, given by Peutinger's Table, are much nearer the truth, than if we carry Thamara three leagues lower down to the south, on the site of Redjom-el-Mezorrhel.

And, lastly, in the "Notitia Imperii," we find again, amongst the garrisons under the command of the Dux Palæstinæ, *Cohors quarta Palæstinorum Thamanæ* (most likely meant for Thamaræ)—"at Thamara the fourth cohort of the Palestines."

I have quoted all the passages I am acquainted with, in which there is any mention of Thamara. I must now try to justify the identification which I propose between El-Maïet-Embarrheg and Thamara.*

1. The modern name itself, with the sound of the letter *t*, uniting it either with the word Maï*et*, or the word Qalaa*t* (Maï*et-Embarrheg*, or Qalaa*t-Embarrheg*), retains in my opinion most evident signs of the primitive appellation ; supposing, however, that it was not the Romans who crippled the word Maï*et-Embarrheg* to give it the Latin form Thamara. However that may be, between Maï*et-Embarrheg* and Thamara the difference is not so great but that the two denominations might be made to identify.

2. El-Maïet-Embarrheg was positively situated on the

* Thamara means the Palm-trees. Can there possibly be any identity between the ancient Thamara and the place called Palmar by William of Tyre, who at that time confounded this place with Zouera or Zoar.

road described in Peutinger's Table, leading from Er-Rabba to Jerusalem; for in that Itinerary there is not a word said of Zoara, which would certainly have been mentioned if the road had gone up the valley of the Ouad-ez-Zouera.

3. We have seen at the Qalaat-Embarrheg, and on the other bank of the Ouad, military constructions, which can be referred to the Romans; or at any rate, which were likely to have been used and occupied by them; and this circumstance agrees perfectly with the assertion of Eusebius.

4. And lastly, the presence of a plentiful spring, like that of Embarrheg, would be enough (even supposing that there did not remain any vestiges of buildings in the vicinity) to prove that all the successive masters of this arid country felt the importance of a strong post at that particular point.

From the evidence I have adduced, I boldly maintain that Qalaat-Embarrheg is precisely the fort where the garrison of Thamara was stationed.

Whilst I am taking notes and studying the general disposition of the ancient town, whatever it may have been, which once stood at the entrance of the Ouad-el-Maïet-Embarrheg, my companions and our luggage, issuing from the ravine, and climbing its right bank, march due south. I hasten to join them, and leave the foot of the castellum at forty-nine minutes past eight. It takes me rather more than five minutes to reach the other side of the Ouad. By fifty-eight minutes past eight I pass the southern wall of the inclosure round Thamara, after having crossed a considerable space covered on either side with heaps of ruins, similar to those I observed at Aÿn-Djedy.

We have now to our right a high mountain, the

culminating point of which is about two thousand yards off. We are treading the beach, and the sea is only eighty yards from us. By one minute after nine we cross a ravine running from west to east, and our road inclines south-south-east. Seven minutes later we come to three other ravines, being the three branches of the bed of a torrent, which descends from a circular fissure, scooped in the side of a mountain distant from us some twelve or fifteen yards.

By thirteen minutes past nine we cross another water-course coming down from the same chasm. The beach, about eight yards wide, is strewed with large stones. To speak more correctly, it is not a beach, but the declivity of a low hill, sloping gently to the sea. By nineteen minutes past nine, we encounter again some very palpable remains of a current of lava, and are in front of the Ouad-en-Nedjid, the bed of which we cross without impediment. Here appear again the green-sand hills so often referred to, the nearest of which are situated about six hundred yards to the right of our road. The sea is distant about fifty yards.

By half-past nine we are opposite a well-defined crater, distant from us fifteen hundred yards, and from which issue five torrents, the beds of which we cross successively in a few minutes. To our right are hillocks of pebbles along the foot of the mountain : to our left the usual sand-hills. The mountain is low in comparison with those we have rounded until now ; I scarcely think it reaches three hundred yards in height. By forty-two minutes past nine, the hillocks of sand disappear, and we march over the side of an eminence, strewed with small scattered stones. Behind this hill are low mountains, the bases of which

appear to be distant about eight hundred yards. By a quarter to ten, the beach, scarcely forty yards wide, is covered with brambles; many salt springs issue from the foot of the hill, and form a kind of morass, grown all over with a thick oily plant of a dark green colour, called by the Arabs, "kali." This salt morass extends over a length of about three hundred yards.

Since forty-two minutes past nine o'clock we have been marching due south; at fifty-one minutes past, we turn south-south-west, keeping in this direction for about six minutes; then we turn again south-south-east. The sand-hills re-appear to our right, and we discover, five hundred yards off, the vertical steep of an immense crater, encumbered with huge heaps of sand. The beach is here only fifty yards wide; and about fifteen hundred yards beyond the crater begins the valley or Ouad-ez-Zouera, divided from us by a plain covered with sand-hills.

Here we make our first halt of five minutes, to listen to the advice of Scheikh Abou-Daouk. It appears that the country we are about to enter has a bad reputation, and that it would be imprudent to allow our luggage to travel in advance, without our escort.

By twelve minutes past ten we resume our march, closing as much as possible the ranks of our caravan, our direction being south-east. As I have said just now, we are about fifteen hundred yards distant from the mouth of the Ouad-ez-Zouera. To our left the beach widens rapidly, and is covered with small trees, forming a sort of thicket, through which protrude some specimens of the arborescent glass wort, which one might take for tamarisks, if we did not recognise their identity. The plain we are crossing is strewed with large boulders and rolled pebbles.

To the south, another plain begins to open, with a few scattered acacias. This is the plain of Sdoum (Sodom ?), bounded by the Djebel-el-Haoua. The bottom of this plain is covered by small sand-hills, beginning at the distance of two thousand yards, and extending as far as the foot of the mountain.

Another mountain is before us, and its first declivities are distant not more than one hundred and fifty yards. This mountain is the Djebel-Sdoum or Djebel-el-Melehh, the mountain of Sodom. Let us be thankful, we have reached it at last, without accident, by twenty-nine minutes past ten.

While we are contemplating, with intense joy, this place, which we have attained without encountering serious danger, although with great exertions, Belly, Loysel, and Rothschild incautiously plunge into the thicket, in search of game. Our Scheikhs are vexed at their imprudence. If we can credit them, this copse is peopled with robbers and assassins. For some minutes we shout with all our might to recall our adventurous sportsmen. They give no answer, and we send some of our escort in pursuit.

Abou-Daouk becomes enraged. "If you want me to escort you and to bring you back alive," says he, "do not separate from each other ; for I could not then answer for your safety. Besides, it is not only the robbers you have to fear in this country. Look at this pit ; it was caused, a year since, by an unfortunate camel, swallowed up in a bottomless abyss, which opened suddenly under his feet. Do you want the same accident to happen to any of your party ? Do you wish to be murdered, or robbed at the very least ? If so, you have only to indulge in such excursions as your companions are now undertaking, and you

will very soon meet what you will bring on yourselves, in the face of my urgent remonstrances." Fortunately, for once we escape with the alarm. Our Bedouins have overtaken the rash sportsmen and bring them back to us. I lecture them, with as grave a countenance as I can assume, pointing out the fatal pit, close to which we are standing, a plunge into which would be badly compensated by the death of every partridge in the world.

Once more collected, we resume our march, and proceeding eastward, with the object of rounding the base of the hill of salt or Sodom, we find ourselves, by thirty-eight minutes past ten, exactly between the foot of this strange mountain and the sea. The shore is two hundred and fifty, and the mountain only fifty yards from us. The beach we are treading is composed of loose sand, covered with saline incrustations. Our horses' feet constantly sink in it above the fetlock. To our left are small pools of water, constituting real salt wells, and producing a perfectly crystallised salt of the most dazzling whiteness. A Bedouin, nearly naked, is here disposing this salt in heaps. We draw near him, and ask him to give us two or three handfuls of his commodity. He complies with great readiness; and as we present him in return two or three piastres, he seems perfectly astonished at our munificence.

After five minutes' halt near the salt-maker, we resume our march heavily over this harassing ground. By eleven o'clock we pass close by a hillock, fifteen yards in diameter, covered with large rough stones that look as though they had been burnt, and which constituted at some remote and unascertainable period, a part of a round structure immediately commanding the shore. The sea is only thirty yards off to our left, and the mountain side not more than

twenty in the opposite direction. The sight of this building impresses me strongly, and my thoughts revert to Sodom. I question Abou-Daouk; "What is that?" "Qasr-Qadim" ("An ancient castle"), is the answer. "The name?" "Redjom-el-Mezorrhel" (the heap of fallen stones.)

On this identical spot Colonel Lapie has placed Thamara. I know not in what narrative he has found mention of this ruin, which he calls Tell-el-Msoggal. All I can say on the subject is, that in the map of Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and Syria, published by Herisson (At Jean's, rue Saint-Jean-de-Beauvais, No. 10), I find marked at the south-western point of the Dead Sea, and consequently in a correct locality, this same Tell-el-Msoggal.

For myself, I entertain no doubt that I see before me the ruins of a building which was anciently a part of Sodom. The Scheikh, Abou-Daouk, is very explicit on this point. When I ask him "Where was the town of Sodom?" he answers me, "Here." "And did this ruin belong to the condemned city?" "Sahihh" ("Assuredly"). "Are there other vestiges of Sodom?" "Nâam! Fih kherabat ktir" ("Yes, there are a great many"). "Where are they?" "Hon oua hon" ("There, and there"), and he points to the extremity of the salt mountain which we have just wound along, and the plain, planted with acacias, extending to the foot of the mountain towards the Ouad-ez-Zouera. Most unfortunately it is now too late to retrace our steps, and take a cursory glimpse of these ruins, even for a moment. But the warning will serve; and as we shall return this way in a few days, I purpose to look out more carefully, and to examine into these ruins to which our gallant Scheikh has called my

attention. I really think I feel more pleasure in knowing that I shall then be enabled to contemplate the remains of the celebrated Sodom, than I feel regret in having now only seen this kind of advance post, placed like a light-house close to the sea-shore, and called Redjom-el-Mezorrhel. The halt at the camel's pit, the admonition of Abou-Daouk, and the uneasiness caused by the imprudence of my companions, naturally prevented me from examining the base and declivity of the salt mountain with as much care as I should have done under other circumstances. On the return of our sportsmen we resumed our march with increased speed to make up for the time lost. I now begin to lecture the rash wanderers myself, and this additional avocation consoles me for the negligence I so bitterly regret, but which I hope to retrieve on our return. During the next hour we continue marching over the same light and efflorescent soil, between the salt mountain and the sea; keeping nearly at the same distance from either; about fifty yards from the shore, and thirty from the cliffs. Thus we wind along the uneven flank of the mountain, which at the summit scarcely exceeds one hundred yards in height. When opposite the Redjom-el-Mezorrhel our course was south-east; eleven minutes later we turned to south-south east; then for twenty minutes again alternately south-east and south-south-east, until by half-past eleven our direction became south-south-west; at forty-eight minutes past eleven we march south-south-east again.

At eight minutes before twelve we stop to breakfast, close to a cavern which, we are told, penetrates the mountain of Sodom from one side to the other. It is called El-Morharrah, meaning simply, the grotto, or

cave. Here, Abou-Daouk tells us, the robbers resort for refuge, who watch to plunder the few travellers venturing across this country. Unhappy thieves! they must live poorly indeed if they have no other provision than the produce of their rapine! At any rate, they have but a dismal habitation in the cave, before which we have halted to eat some starved fowl and mildewed bread.

One word concerning the general aspect of the salt mountain. The Djebel-el-Melehh, or Djebel-Sdoum, presents a compact mass of rock salt, the height of which varies, but never exceeds one hundred yards. It is of a grayish colour, but the upper layers are tinged with green and red. At the summit, the salt is covered over by a stratum of clay of a dirty white hue. In some parts we observe, very distinctly, the same kind of green sandy eminences which we have so often met since we left Sebbeh. The whole of the hill-side we have just coasted presents numerous fissures hollowed by the winter torrents, and the constant crumbling of the soil. At many points appear vast pyramidal columns of salt, one of which has no doubt been taken by Captain Lynch for the famous pillar into which Lot's wife was transformed at the time of the destruction of Sodom. All the disconnected masses, and those which still adhere to the mountain, have their surfaces deeply furrowed and indented by the rains. And lastly, wherever the rock leans over, its lower part is hung with stalactites of salt. As to the pillar mentioned by Captain Lynch, its resembles anything you please, excepting the hill of Sodom.

Is it possible to explain the death of Lot's wife? I am inclined to believe so, and this would be my solution.

At the moment when the huge mountain was heaved up volcanically, there must have been throughout its whole extent tremendous falls of detached masses, similar to those we have observed at every step. Lot's wife having loitered behind, either through fright or curiosity, was most likely crushed by one of these descending fragments, and when Lot and his children turned round to look towards the place where she had stopped, they saw nothing but the salt rock which covered her body. The catastrophe may be explained in many ways, but having visited the spot, I hold to the opinion I have now advanced, without seeking, however, to impose it on others.

By a little more than half-past twelve we mount our horses again, and proceed, in close order, in a south-south-east direction. Scarcely have we been two or three minutes on the march, when, at the entrance of a sunken plain, covered with saline incrustations, an unusual movement takes place in our caravan. Abou-Daouk and the other horsemen start forward at a gallop. Hamdan, who has turned as pale as death, follows them almost immediately, and our infantry, who have hastily unslung their guns, and tucked up their skirts to give a greater freedom to their motions, range themselves around their respective Scheikhs. One, who had lingered a little in the rear, comes running at full speed whilst preparing his weapon, for fear he should be accused of having remained intentionally behind at such a moment. "Well, what's the matter?" I inquire of Mohammed, who has drawn close to me, and like the others has prepared his fusil. "You can see them." "See whom?" "Robbers! These are the Ahouethats!"

At that moment I could see absolutely nothing, but in a few seconds after I perceived about thirty ill-looking fellows on foot, nearly naked, but armed with matchlocks, yataghans, and dabbous (wooden clubs). We had evidently fallen in with bad company.

In a moment our guns were cocked, and our pistols in hand. Our baggage mules and moukris in a mass, some paces behind us, advanced unwillingly. As Abou-Daouk came up to the brigands, they were sitting on a small sandy ledge, clutching their weapons. A colloquy had already begun between them, when we reached the scene of action in close platoon. When they spied our ample provision of double-barrelled guns, and pistols, the rascals thought it more prudent to parley than to attack us. Abou-Daouk had already said briefly, "In half a minute you will be killed to the last man;" and when they became convinced that such a result was more than probable, they changed their manner. Then all rising, each drew near to one of our men, took him by the hand, and touching foreheads, embraced several times, like loving brothers.

It was then forty-nine minutes past twelve. Peace being declared, our new friends offered the hospitality of their encampment; and while we were hesitating as to our compliance, two new cavaliers galloped towards us, and joined in conversation. The one was Abou-Daouk's brother, the other a young man of five or six and twenty, called Sellam-el-Lahman, Scheikh of the marauders, with whom we had just begun to make acquaintance.

Abou-Daouk's brother, as I have already said, had gone on in advance, to sound the dispositions of the

tribes established on the opposite shore of the Dead Sea, in the Rhôr-Safieh, where we purposed encamping this same evening. The first living beings he had met were these Ahouethats, whose tents were pitched in the Rhôr, at the outlet of the muddy plain before us, and which we have to pass through. He had placed himself in communication with their Scheikh, Sellam, who had consented to receive us in his encampment, under the promise of a bakhshish. His faithful subjects had then declared they would have their share, otherwise they would intercept, attack, kill, and plunder us. "You shall have nothing at all," answered Sellam. "Go, and much good may it do you."

The advice of Abou-Daouk's brother had determined Sellam to take no part in a fray where his men were sure to get nothing but broken heads, and thus it was they had arrived just at the spot where they expected to help themselves at our expense. I have said how their evil designs were speedily abandoned, and how they were wise enough to prefer peace to war.

Sellam came towards me, after a few words with his banditti, which I did not understand; he took me tenderly by the tip of my beard, kissed it in the most reverential manner, calling me his father, and then began to caracole and caper round us with the most engaging smile and demeanour possible. He was mounted on a small bay horse, without a saddle, and nothing in the shape of harness but a small piece of whipcord; yet still he contrived to manage his charger with wonderful agility. His dress consisted of a short gray cloth shirt, and a kafieh. On his left side was suspended a straight yataghan, the sheath formed of two thin plates of wood

bound together with pieces of packthread. But though the Scheikh's accoutrements were miserable in the extreme, his air was graceful, and all his motions were in such perfect harmony with those of his horse, that the group seemed a living fragment of the friezes of the Parthenon.

All that I have just related took place within four minutes, and by fifty-three minutes past twelve we resumed our march, directly across the plain opening before us, in a south-south-west direction. The side of the Salt Mountain was then a hundred yards distant to our right; we went on flanking it, but increasing our distance until nearly half-past one, when we found ourselves opposite its southern extremity, and at a distance of eight hundred yards. Beyond re-appeared again the everlasting hillocks of green sand, so strongly resembling ruins. The ground, over which we were advancing with difficulty, was muddy and yielding, a naked plain, destitute of vegetation. This plain is called the Sabkhah (the plain of the salt mud).

By thirty-one minutes past one we crossed the wide bed of a river with much water—most probably the Ouad-el-Feekreh of M. de Berton; but none of our Arabs are acquainted with that name. This watercourse, and those we met a little farther on, are called among them Esh-Chothnah (the rapids). Having gained the opposite bank, we turned east-south-east, then almost immediately due east.

The Ahouethats have left us, with the exception of their Scheikh, Sellam, and, quickening their pace, have gained, much faster than we can, the eastern side of the Dead Sea. An immense thicket of reeds lies some

thousand yards in our front; this thicket divides the Sabkhah from the Rhôr-Safieh, where our new friends are encamped, on whose faithful co-operation we have not yet, I confess, unlimited reliance. Sellam continues capering round us, repeating his protestations of loyalty; but I read in the somewhat anxious looks of Abou-Daouk and Hamdan, that the fine phrases of their brother Scheikh are coin of no great current value in their eyes; instinctively, we all understand that henceforth we had better keep a sharp look-out.

To our right we have a range of high hills bounding on the south the Sabkhah, through which we are passing. The foot of these hills seems woody, as far as we can judge from a distance of between five and six miles at the least, and the trees we distinguish are evidently the continuation of the copse overspreading the Rhôr-Safieh before us.

By twelve minutes past two we have crossed other watercourses, tolerably rapid, and running directly from south to north, until they empty themselves into the Dead Sea. Our ground is difficult of passage, saturated with moisture, and as slippery as soap. Our horses sink in it fetlock deep, and cannot get rid of the adhesive mud which clings to them every step. We ride in Indian file, and follow exactly the track of our Arab leaders. The precaution is indispensable, for the bogs are numerous in this desolate plain, and it would be exceedingly disagreeable to be engulphed in the mire.

By thirty-six minutes past two we make a sharp turn to cross another very large watercourse, running from south-west to north-east. We then move eastward, and by forty-nine minutes past two we plunge amongst the

reeds, which are here of such enormous height, and so densely planted that we have great difficulty in keeping together. The Ahouethats would have a fine chance of picking us off, man by man, if they had conceived the notion, and we speculate with some little anxiety on the real motive of their sudden start in advance, leaving us to thread this confounded defile of reeds, where you can scarcely keep sight of your preceding file, and your immediate follower.

After some minutes the reeds disappear, the ground becomes a little firmer, and we enter fairly on the Rhôr-Safieh. This time we are in an actual forest; but of a most novel description. It consists of clumps of slender trunks of trees, entwined and huddled together like the sticks in a fagot. Thousands of prickly branches interlace each other around these impenetrable clusters, forming countless thickets, several feet in diameter; thickets which you cannot pass without leaving portions of your dress suspended from the thorns. In the intervals between the thickets, the damp greasy soil is covered with dry stalks, the gigantic stubble of last season's harvest. Everywhere the ground is raked up by the wild boars abounding in the Rhôr, and living there on the fat of the land, but always having an eye on the hostile panthers. Upon all the upper branches perch beautiful little pink doves, who look at us, as we go by, with perfect indifference, and who are evidently on terms of complete understanding with the Bedouins. Here and there, humming-birds, with ruby and emerald frills, flutter from tree to tree, disturbed by the noise we make in treading over the dry stalks, rather than frightened by the approach of any familiar danger.

As we are now altogether in a new world, our sportsmen are much disposed to assail some of the birds we are admiring; but I strictly forbid a single shot, for the slightest alarm in a place like this might bring on a disagreeable collision. Besides, we perceive distinctly on our flanks, through the small glades, troops of armed Bedouins, and we are not quite sure whether they are friends or enemies watching for a favourable opportunity of sending a ball through each of our heads. We remain on our guard, although the Scheikh, Sellam, is continuing his fantasia, stopping only now and then to take me delicately by the beard, with the tip of his fingers, and then kisses it in token of respect. At last we arrive at an opening in the forest, where the trees have been cleared by men and beasts; in every direction small black tents, three or four feet high at the utmost, are suspended from the thickets, and we alight at last in a glade in the very centre of the encampment; the grand square of the present capital of the Ahouethats.

The men who were running along the flank of our column arrive at the same time. We recognise in them our Thâameras and Djahalins, who, fearing an ambuscade, had been beating the bushes to the right and left, like practised skirmishers. We must now put our trust in Providence; for we are in the wolf's mouth, and have gone too far to retreat.

In a twinkling, Sellam has tied his little bay horse to his tent, and comes back to us bounding through the bushes. He begins by pushing aside, haughtily enough, all his people who are flocking around us, with the curiosity of savages who have never seen Europeans. In the number we recognise the sinister-looking faces

we had already gazed on with so little satisfaction some hours before, at the Djebel-el-Melehh; and amongst others a tall, villainously-featured negro, for whom each of us, in sympathetic, but silent accord, had reserved our very first bullet. All these good folks retain their arms. We imitate their prudent example, and allow the most curious to admire our guns and pistols while the tents are being pitched.

Sellam traces a line round our camp, which he forbids his tribe to cross; this ceremony over, he tells us that within the inclosure we are under his protection, and safe against any attempt at robbery. It turns out as he says; the Ahouethats respect our limits, and though they throng about the encampment, and exhibit many forbidding faces, we soon get reconciled to their tenacious curiosity.

Some minutes after Sellam re-appears, dragging in two sheep, which he presents to me as a gift, and prepares immediately to slaughter at my feet, to do me honour; I request him to exhibit his skill in butchery a little further off. Three paces suffice, and there he sets roundly to work, with the assistance of two or three confederates of similar taste: and in a few minutes the still panting carcasses of the poor animals are handed over to Matteo, to the infinite satisfaction of our Arabs, who catch at last a glimpse of the long-promised festival, till now always postponed to the next opportunity, that never came.

After his present of the sheep, Sellam, who perfectly understands the duties of hospitality, visits us once more, accompanied by his son, an urchin, three or four years old, in scanty garments like his father, and carrying between his hands a wooden porringer, intolerably dirty,

but filled with camel's milk. Not to taste it would have been a mortal affront. I therefore shut my eyes and drink, without wry faces, and pass the porringer to my next hand neighbour. Each in his turn quaffs the share he would too willingly relinquish to his companions.

When we have at last got rid of Sellam, Hamdan, who has his suspicions, advises us to be watchful and keep strictly on our guard. Abou-Daouk repeats the same caution, but his good-humoured fat face has not lost an atom of its usual serenity. His ophthalmia is cured, so for the present he is too happy to be afraid of anything. He seems constitutionally unused to fear, and laughs as heartily to-day as yesterday, exhibiting, as usual, his two interminable teeth. "Thou art dwelling just now," says he, "with abominable villains; all these Ahouethats are thieves of the first water, but we shall certainly prevent them from robbing thee of anything: only let me warn thee against rambling away from the camp, lest some misfortune might befal thee." Hamdan, whose physiognomy is singularly pale and anxious, has thought proper to lay aside his turban, and to give himself as complete a Bedouin look as possible, by mounting a kafieh, after the fashion of our hosts, covering his head and binding it around his tarbouch with a cord of camels' hair.

Whilst our people are pitching the tents, the escort cut down copse-wood sufficient for the fires of our kitchen and the bivouacs. Our two sheep are roasting in grand style, and Edward, Philippe, and I take advantage of this moment of liberty to gather a rich botanical harvest in the surrounding thicket. Here the *Asclepias procera* re-appears in immense quantities, mixed with the *Neubq*

and the *Areq*, &c., shrubs almost unknown in Europe. Amongst the bushes I find also a pretty little gourd or pumpkin; the fruit long, the leaves and stalk as rough to the touch as a grater, running from branch to branch, and clinging so tenaciously, that it is very difficult to gather it; lastly, the indigo plant in great abundance.

Our botanising is soon over; for every time we happen to stray ten yards from the tents, one of our Thâameras or Djahalins runs to intreat us to turn back and avoid exposing ourselves to accident. We feel much inclined to neglect these warnings, which we consider superfluous, so ready are we always to disbelieve a danger until we actually encounter it; but luckily daylight declines rapidly, and we determine then to follow their advice for good and all.

No sooner are we back again than we begin, stupidly enough, to expatiate on the hospitality of the Ahouethats. "After all, they are a good sort of people," we say to each other "and what primitive manners! How identical with all we have read in the Bible: the life of the patriarchs restored; 'tis admirable." I abstain from tiring the reader with a long story of our absurd enthusiasm, for we ought to have been better advised, and less ready with our admiration.

Putting all things together, another day has passed with only an imaginary alarm; and we expect a constant repetition of the same—an honourable confidence, no doubt, but which soon subsides as we become more intimate with the parties with whom we have to deal.

After our dinner, which passes over merrily, we set to work, as usual, arranging our notes and acquisitions of the day; then we compose ourselves to sleep without

uneasiness. I only remark that our little army which at Sebbeh sang and danced for joy at the mere promise of a sheep which never came, neither sings nor dances this evening, though the sheep has been devoured. Nobody sleeps round the watch-fires; it seems decidedly that our position is less pleasant here than on the opposite side of the Dead Sea.

January 13th.

We were all on foot by earliest dawn, resuming, with the return of day, our bright fancies of the preceding evening. Unfortunately we were not long in reversing the medal, and finding the unpleasant side of patriarchal manners.

I had, as usual, left my tent to take the bearings of the principal mountains and valleys lying before us. Ahouad and some of the Ahouethats were giving me the names I wanted. I was busy with my notes and angles, and deploring the necessity of passing on, without having leisure to visit the ruin of Safieh (which ruin, situated on a small low hill, south-east of our camp, strongly resembled the Qalaat-Embarrheg), when I am joined by Hamdan, who, with a most dejected look, entreats me to return to my tent and listen to what he has to say to me.

The patriarchs have sent in their bill of charges. This means that, before we are allowed to depart, we shall have to repay, in good sterling piastres, the pastoral hospitality of our knavish friends. Hamdan and Abou-Daouk have been already discussing, for the last hour, our endangered interests, and our amiable hosts insist that we must give them all the cash we can spare. Every soul, from the highest to the lowest personage in the tribe, claims his

share of our entrance money, and every one very naturally expects that his share shall be as large as possible; otherwise, these gentlemen, who feel infinitely honoured by our society, are disposed to enjoy it for some time longer, which means that they will not permit us to leave the place except on their own terms. The affair becomes serious. We are strong enough, it is true, to force our way through the rabble forming the encampment in which we have taken a temporary dwelling, but who knows if other encampments of the same tribe, dispersed in the Rhôr, have not been warned already to come to their assistance? In that case, could we ever come back by the Sabkhah, without being shot down to the last man by the Ahouethats? Evidently we could not. It is wiser, therefore, to submit with a good grace and disburse, while we dispute obstinately the rate at which our generosity is to be taxed. The countenances of our robbers have assumed an insolent expression, which is by no means encouraging. Like true Bedouins, they scream and howl all together as if they were at the stake. The barrier is no longer respected. The noisy crew invade our camp, armed with guns, yataghans, and clubs. They dare not, as yet, make a rush into our tents, but it is plain they will do so before long if we are not expeditious in our arrangements.

Sellam makes his entrance. He kisses my beard ten times in succession, and calls me, more affectionately than ever, his father. He then proceeds to business. "My people are very poor," says he, "thou art powerful and rich; give them all thou hast to give." I dare not dismiss him abruptly, and I try to cajole him with small presents which, they say, promotes friendship. He wants a keepsake—nothing more! He is so devoted to me! He

loves me so dearly! And thereupon he kisses my beard over and over again.

I send for the bag containing our stock of trinkets and intended presents, and open the question. "Since thou art the father of a little boy who yesterday offered me some milk, thou must have a wife."

"I have three!"

Alas! thought I, without venturing to express my thoughts. "Three wives, Sellam! they are too numerous!"

"Oh, no! I shall soon have four!"

I shorten our colloquy, lest he should demand marriage presents for five or six prospective nuptials, and produce my proposed donations: cornelian rings set in silver; seals of the same value, which I recommended as eligible for a splendid pair of ear-rings; a silver watch, worth about six francs; and lastly, an elastic silver bracelet, of very light weight. He balances the whole, and is by no means satisfied. "Is it silver?" says he. "Certainly." "How light it is!" "Because the silver is very pure."

Sellam looks at me as much as to say, Do you take me for a fool? I certainly had no idea of giving him all I had exhibited, but he had not the most remote idea of relinquishing an item; he crams the sum total into his shirt, affects to be pleased, and, kissing my beard again, retires from the tent.

I fancy I am now rid of him; rid of a Bedouin who intends to grind you! the idea is chimerical. In five minutes after he returns and shows the bracelet, but, of course, holding it resolutely in his clutch. "Where is his brother?" says he. "If thou hast but one, my wife declines the gift, she wants one for each arm." It appears that

bracelets in this country are called brothers. With a very ill grace I resign the brother he demands, and he disappears again.

Have I done with him this time? Less than ever. The pertinacious rogue re-appears, and says with consummate assurance—"And for my two sheep and my milk, what art thou going to give me now?" I confess we are all strongly tempted to kick him out of the tent, but this summary proceeding would at once bring down upon us his attendant brigands. The proverb says, you must howl when others yell; we therefore declare unanimously, and with loud voices, that on that point we decline treating with him. The price of the pretended gift is to be discussed with Hamdan and Matteo. The Scheikh, on this, leaves us hastily to go in search of them.

Time wears on, and we are chafing under the delay. We feel, too, a little ashamed of our premature eulogiums on Bedouin hospitality. At last, by nine o'clock, and after ten solemn negotiations held in ten different places—for it appears that in Arab councils they shift their locality every time they alter a proposition—Hamdan and our maître d'hôtel present themselves, rather crest-fallen, to announce that five hundred piastres will probably satisfy the Ahouethats. "Five hundred piastres for two sheep and a bowl of milk!" The price is a little higher than we had expected.

Francis, Rothschild's dragoman, is furious; for the last few days he has been contemplating with silent despair our obstinacy in running into adventures; now that we are in a scrape, through our own imprudence, according to him, we ought to refuse everything, shoot every soul of

them, and force our way through. Fortunately, we are not excited by his heroic suggestions, and since we can get out of trouble for five hundred piastres, let us pay them at once and be off. I ratify the bargain without a moment's hesitation, and our luggage is finally loaded on the backs of our mules.

Heaven be praised! By twenty minutes past nine we leave the place, and should feel quite at ease did we not perceive Sellam and his band preparing to accompany us. What does this mean? we cannot guess, but it disconcerts us exceedingly.

Our course is north-west, through the Rhôr; I mean through those strange thickets of prickly trees, which I have described before. By twenty-eight minutes past nine we cross a pretty rivulet of running water, flowing from south-south-east to north-west, and called the Nahr-Safieh. At half-past nine we turn due north, and, for the first time, I have the pleasure of taking my notes without being blinded by the sun.

At this point a huge mass of reddish rocks rises in view, distant about three thousand five hundred yards. This red mountain is soon masqued by a lower one, rent and rugged, and of the deepest black tint; this last is only three thousand yards from us. Between these two heights, the dark colours of which are strongly contrasted, a narrow valley opens, called the Ouad-el-Abiadh. We are still in the forest, but we can already distinguish its boundary, between us and the mountains of Moab. By thirty-seven minutes past nine we reach a very wide bed of a torrent, with a fine stream running through it, in the direction where we cross from south-west to north-east. This is the Nahr-el-Karaki. We then wind along the

black mountain I have just mentioned, the axis of which sensibly approaches to our road.

The limit of the Rhôr (I give this name more exclusively to the forest) is scarcely two hundred yards distant, on our right; then follows a rocky plain, ascending gently up towards the foot of the mountain. Our next course is north-east. By forty-six minutes past nine we have left the forest, and are moving across a plain strewed with large boulders of red sandstone. Our route then turns north-north-east, following this direction until ten o'clock, then turning east again. By seven minutes past ten we are opposite the northern point of the black mountain. Here a vast amphitheatre, or, to speak more properly, a crater, opens on the side of a second red mountain, joining the former one and with a corresponding axis. Behind this rises a still higher mountain, called the Djebel-el-A'aza. The ouad leading to the crater is called the Ouad-el-Zend-jbil. We then resume a north-east direction. The ouad is commanded to the north by another black mountain, called the Chôeub-es-Samour.

By a quarter-past ten we turn our backs upon the mountains, and march nearly due west. Lastly, by twenty-three minutes past ten, we arrive at an encampment much more important than that of the Ahouethats. We are now in the district of the Beni-Sakhar, a rich and powerful tribe.—"El-Beni-Sakhar koull-houm nas melahh!" "All the Beni-Sakhar are honest people," exclaims Hamdan, who seems to be relieved from a heavy burthen, and, whilst speaking, signs to our moukris to unload the mules.

Why! we have been only one hour in motion, and

must we halt already? Remonstrances are useless—it is impossible to proceed a step farther without the consent of our new hosts; we must, therefore, first of all propitiate their friendship. But let us be cautious. The Beni-Sakhars being richer than the Ahouethats, now that we are familiar with the local manners of the people, we need no one to tell us that their friendship will cost us a much larger sum. In this country, you travel as you can, never as you please. We make up our minds accordingly to take things as they happen, and proceed to pitch our camp.

Still, there is the difference of night and day between the miserable beggars with whom we were staying last night, and the Bedouins in whose hands we find ourselves this morning. The men have a superior air, and something like honest countenances. They are better dressed and better armed. Innumerable droves of camels surround the encampment; magnificent horses are picketed before some of the tents, and long lances, testifying the warlike character of their owners, are planted in the ground.

The Ahouethats appear not to feel themselve quite at ease in the midst of this tribe, who would only have to give the signal, and they would be annihilated. They appear as humble now, as they were rude and arrogant two hours ago.

Hamdan and Abou-Daouk have proceeded at once to parley with the Scheikhs, who are conducted to our presence; at last, we are introduced to something like gentlemen. Their dress is composed of a long scarlet robe, confined round the loins by a girdle, in which is placed a curved sabre; their abayas or cloaks are black, or

striped white and brown ; like Hamdan and Abou-Daouk, they wear red boots, and their heads are covered with a kafieh, fastened by a cord of camels' hair. The Scheikhs are three in number ; none but these enter our tent, and I offer them pipes and coffee. The tribe remain at a respectful distance, and restrain their curiosity, however natural. Amongst the hundreds of which they are composed, probably not one has ever before seen an European. They gaze on us with bewildered looks. Everything in our apparel strikes them with surprise ; the buttons of our coats especially excite their wonder ; they touch them with a certain respect, and positively take them for so many talismans.

The one among the Scheikhs who appears the most courteous, is called Samet-Aly : a little man, thirty or thirty-two years old, with a handsome face and gentle voice ; the second, who seems to be of equal rank, is named Selameh : he is about five and thirty, but he squints, which gives him an unpleasant look ; the third, whose name is not mentioned, is an elderly Bedouin, of about fifty. As he preserves uniform silence, and leaves the other two to conduct the conversation, I conclude he is of inferior station. After half an hour's parley, the three Scheikhs leave us and return to their encampment, accompanied by Abou-Daouk and Hamdan.

We thought we were rid of the Ahouethats, but we were mistaken. The five hundred piastres agreed upon, had been paid by us into the hands of Hamdan, and we naturally concluded that he had delivered the money to those for whom it was intended. Either he had not done so, or our new friends—the Scheikhs of the western shore —had thought proper to levy a toll upon the sum total.

At any rate, the demands are renewed as noisily as ever. Sellam is not the least clamorous; I reply, in a still louder tone, that I have given five hundred piastres to Hamdan for him and his people, and that he may go to the devil, if he is not yet satisfied. It appears plain, the worthy individual was not previously aware that five hundred piastres had been credited to him and his band; for, on receiving this joyful information, he kissed my beard once more, and bolted immediately from the tent, to carry his demands to some other quarter.

At length we have the good fortune to be allowed to breakfast. Immediately afterwards, Samet-Aly comes in again and invites me to visit the encampment of his tribe. Edward and Philippe accompany me; Rothschild and Francis amuse themselves with shooting in the immediate vicinity; Belly, Loysel, and Louis take the first Bedouin they meet, and look for game in another direction; Hamdan and Samet-Aly assure us there is nothing to fear, so we all pursue our different courses in complete security. We first make the circuit of the encampment, in the centre of which there is a considerable clearing, entirely free from tents, and forming a kind of public square. From this open space all the tents diverge. They are constructed of black, or white and black striped stuff. Samet-Aly leads us with a certain self-conceit, into his own tent, of tolerable size, where several women, old and young, uniformly clothed in a single blue shift, their heads, legs, and arms bare, are cooking upon an iron plate some of the thin cakes which constitute the bread of the wandering Arabs. These women have their hair greased with butter and oil, until it looks nearly red, and are anything but attractive. Some of the youngest amongst

them are well made, and have good features ; but their abominable hair and the blue tattooing on their faces destroy all pretensions to beauty. They have in general fine teeth ; this is their chief recommendation. All are enamoured of smoking, and besiege us for tobacco, which we part with sparingly, as we anticipate a probable exhaustion of our supply.

Samet-Aly, after having forced upon our acceptance some warm cakes, just fried by his women, demands our admiration of his charger ; a fine black mare, to whom the sight of Europeans is an alarming prodigy, for she springs back and appears terrified at our costume, and her master has much difficulty in soothing her with caresses. As we are anxious to make the most of our forced day's rest, we ask the Scheikh to give us a guide to the beach, in the hope of discovering some new objects of natural history. The guide is procured, and we start immediately.

Our walk has been a very uninteresting one : no insects, no shells, except some dead *Mélanias* washed down by the mountain torrents. A few fine samples of rock comprise all we have been able to collect. Having cleared the thickets, where countless droves of camels are grazing, we found a sandy plain, bounded by an unfordable watercourse, covered with small reeds, which barred our further progress. We then turned again towards our camp, filling our pockets and loading our Bedouin with pebbles.

On our arrival we encounter the unwelcome surprise of finding things looking worse than ever. Scarcely have we gained our tent, when Sellam enters in a passion. He throws down a handful of piastres upon the table, exclaiming,

"I am no beggar! I have in my tent as much money as I want, I need no alms!" and thereupon he exits theatrically, leaving eighty piastres which he had received for his share of the five hundred we had paid. We thought we had closed accounts with him, and were sorry for this new rupture, which proves that we were not yet sufficiently acquainted with the tricks of Bedouins. In less than half an hour the worthy Scheikh felt such regret for his eighty piastres, that he came back to recover them. By perseverance he contrived to extort from us twenty more, and then an additional ten, to pay, as he said, for the shoeing of his horse. This little supplement obtained, Sellam appeared in ecstasies, embraced us all, shook us affectionately by the hand, and once more departed. This time it was a final leave-taking. We saw him no more.

Belly, Loysel, and Louis had gone to seek for game, under the conduct of one of the Bedouins of the encampment. They came back in an hour somewhat faster than they went. I must explain the reason. On reaching the limit of the Rhôr, just beyond the thickets, their guide began suddenly to run, and then with a loud cry threw himself flat on the ground. At this cry a dozen Bedouins rushed from the bushes and approached our friends, who felt a little surprised at this strange manœuvre. The new comers, as they advanced, repeated their eternal Saoua! Saoua! (together! together!), a word which means generally that they are coming with friendly intentions. Loysel, with his habitual confidence, went forward to meet them; when Louis (having had the advantage of studying the Arab character in Algeria), stopped him short. "Sir, sir," said he, "you do not know these rascals. Take care; they will try to surround us, make

a dash at our arms, and settle our account, if we allow them to come too near. Keep them at a distance." Immediately the three guns were brought to the level, and the Arabs stopped at once. Our incautious ramblers then retired in order, and retraced their steps to the camp, ready to fire if pressed upon. The strangers, whose intentions were more than doubtful, dared not follow them, and dispersed. Their plan had evidently failed.

Until dinner-time we were quietly occupied in our tent, but after our repast new troubles came upon us. The Beni-Sakhars express their wish to become our sole protectors. "On their own territory," they say, "they possess the exclusive right of escorting strangers." Besides, they are strong enough to enable us to dispense with every other guard. They require us to dismiss together Thâameras and Djahalins, and to select from among their own people whatever escort we require. Hamdan, who announced this new *imbroglio*, has again turned a little pale; his appetite has left him, and he is tormented by a thousand fears. If our expedition were now to recommence, he would offer less confidently his protection, which has proved so ineffectual. Let us hope, however, that to-morrow everything will be settled amicably. I encourage poor Hamdan as well as I can, though I must say his followers, and especially Ahouad, show much more resolution than their Scheikh. As to Abou-Daouk, he has not been visible throughout the evening.

As soon as night has closed in, a little guttural cry is heard on all sides at once; it is the camels' retreat call. Hundreds of these animals come in, in files, to be parked in the open glade, which we had taken for a public square.

but which proves to be the night cattle-fold of the tribe. Scarcely are the cattle all in, when a loud, irregular, and discordant chant resounds through the Rhôr; it proceeds from a horseman riding at a good pace, whose voice, beginning near us, recedes gradually until entirely lost in the distance. On hearing this strange proclamation, we sally from our tent to inquire the cause, and are told that it is the announcement of a treaty of peace just concluded between the Djahalins and the Beni-Sakhars.

A few months since a dozen camels had been stolen from the Beni-Sakhars, according to the usual practice of the desert; and this had been contrived by the respectable Abou-Daouk, or some of his people. Since that time, Djahalins and Beni-Sakhars had confined their intercourse to musket-shots; and the Djahalin Scheikh, tired of the continual skirmishes, in which he was losing both men and beasts, conceived the fortunate idea of profiting by our visit to offer peace to the powerful tribe he had offended. Now that I have some knowledge of the Bedouins, I ask myself how Abou-Daouk has dared to venture upon the territory of the Beni-Sakhars, when such a cause of enmity ought to have kept him away for ever. How did this cunning diplomatist contrive to appease all rancour, and even engage to restore the stolen camels? I am at a loss to divine. Probably by greasing the palms of our friends Samet-Âly and Selameh, who have declared that the honour of the tribe has received full satisfaction.

This fact is certain, that the legitimate owner of the stolen camels was the identical horseman whom we heard bawling, as he cantered from one encampment to the

other (for there are several encampments of the same tribe in the vicinity), and these are the words he shouted at the full extent of his lungs: "Peace, peace! friendship! friendship between the Djahalins and ourselves! Dhaif-Oullah Abou-Daouk has sworn to restore to us the camels he has taken. Peace, peace! friendship! friendship!" The true meaning of this, properly translated, might be, I suppose, "O Beni-Sakhars! if to-morrow morning you should happen to meet Abou-Daouk and his people intruding on our territory, don't break their heads with a musket-shot or a club; don't run them through with your lances or yataghans. Between Bedouins every quarrel can be made up with a shake of the hand, and we have become again the best friends in the world; they have brought us some honest people, from whom we shall extort bakhshish and contributions at our own discretion. So let it be well known to every one, Abou-Daouk is our most excellent friend!"

By degrees, all noises become hushed around us. Except the low cry of the camels, the barking of the dogs, and the crackling of the bivouac fires, everything has settled into silence. Finally, after a short chat each seeks his camp-bed, and, notwithstanding the vermin that never desert us, all enjoy an excellent night.

January 14th.

We had hoped that all treaties would have been finally settled this morning, and that we should be able to start at an early hour. Another vain illusion. As usual, we were ready with the first dawn; but animated discussions are in progress between the Scheikhs of the Beni-Sakhars on the one side, and Abou-Daouk and

Hamdan, acting in our behalf, on the other. We are not now dealing with paltry robbers like the Ahouethats ; the parties we are treating with to-day are bandits on a superior scale. With gentlemen such as these, we must count piastres by thousands, rather than by hundreds. The delay is enough to drive us mad. From time to time Hamdan or Matteo bring in a verbal bulletin of the progress of the debate ; and we begin to fear that matters, getting from bad to worse, will end by exhausting our purses altogether, a condition with which we may think ourselves tolerably well satisfied.

For more than two hours the high contracting parties have been changing their ground every five minutes, with the view of elucidating their ideas. During that time we smoke our chibouks in silence, invoking patience to our aid, and affecting outwardly the most supreme indifference for the issue of the debate. We are besides surrounded by a bevy of Bedouins of both sexes, who observe us with the most impertinent curiosity, and pester us for tobacco and pipe-bowls.

At last, near ten o'clock, Hamdan announces that the Scheikhs of the Beni-Sakhars demand two thousand five hundred piastres for giving us safe conduct during the remainder of our journey on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. The price is exorbitant ; we are ill-advised enough to hesitate, and moreover to listen to our dragoman Francis, who, from sheer ill-humour, incites us to refuse. By the time we decide upon accepting the conditions offered, it is too late. We send Hamdan and Matteo to say that we agree to pay the stipulated sum ; they return with ghastly looks to inform us that now, in consequence of the delay, the demand has risen to three

thousand piastres! At length my patience is exhausted. I fling away my pipe, and hasten to the seat of council. Taking the Scheikh Selameh by the arm, I tell him in an angry tone that we Frenchmen have but one word, and that what we have once said remains in the memory of Allah. "It is so with us also," answers the Scheikh. "Well, then, prove it better than thou hast just done. Thou hast asked me two thousand five hundred piastres; I have granted them, and now thou dost ask three thousand. Is that having but one word?" Selameh and his friends look rather ashamed! the more so that I have summoned to my aid my utmost knowledge of Arabic, and have pronounced these words so vehemently that all the curious lookers-on around us have perfectly understood them. I begin to hope that my remonstrance has produced the desired effect. Taking then the hand of the Scheikh, I say to him, with the most serious air I can assume, "In the name of the clement and merciful Deity, I swear! that when my companions and I shall have come back safe and sound to this place, close to thy tents, after that thou and thy two friends shall have accompanied and faithfully protected us, I will give thee the three thousand piastres thou hast asked. I have sworn by Allah! Now, Scheikh, in thy turn, swear also by Allah!" Selameh takes the oath I demand, his two companions repeat it after him, and I am perfectly at ease. The ceremony has cost us three thousand piastres, but I can now depend on the fidelity of these men, who would die a thousand deaths rather than break their word so solemnly pledged.

In other respects, this scene has produced a good effect on the tribe, and I find that I have done wisely in intro-

ducing the name of Allah into our treaty. From this moment we are no longer infidels in the eyes of our confederates, and they are henceforward disposed to respect as well as to defend us.

In the meantime our tents and luggage have been struck and loaded. The three Scheikhs have seized their lances, jumped on horseback, and by half-past nine o'clock we are on the march, happy at having surmounted another difficulty, which threatened to be serious.

CHAPTER VIII.

A dead camel.—A panther.—Mohammed in a quicksand.—Providential deliverance.—A relic of the condemned cities.—Extensive ruins.—Second encampment of Beni-Sakhars.—Roses of Jericho.—Bennamerim, or Luhith.—Mistaken by Irby and Mangles, and Captain Lynch, for the ruins of Zoar.—Promontory of El-Lisan, the Tongue.—Expulsion of a Djahalin—Political discussion on the state of France.—Departure from the encampment.—Plain of El-Mezrâah.—The Beni-Ogbâ, a settled tribe.—Nocturnal alarm and combat.—Intended plunder prevented.—Remains of Roman structures.—Ancient road.—Strange visitors.—Tribe of Beni-Hammids.

LEAVING the encampment of the Beni-Sakhars, at half-past nine we proceed obliquely towards the mountain in an easterly direction. We are still in the Rhôr-Safieh; but in a few minutes we have cleared the forest, and enter on the sandy plain we visited the day before.

By a quarter-past ten, after a few moments' halt, we march north-east. A plain, two thousand yards in extent, divides us from the mountain, which is formed of black rocks, rent and calcined by fire. Behind this mountain is another, of inferior height, of reddish rocks, and called the Djebel-A'acy. By twenty-two minutes past ten we are opposite the highest summit of the Djebel-A'acy. To our left, the horizon is limited by the Djebel-es-Sofa and the Djebel-ez-Zouera, in the foreground of which stands out the distinct mass of the Djebel-el-Melehh.

By half-past ten we are opposite the southern point of the Dead Sea, with the black mountain fifteen hundred yards to our right. Our course is still north-east, whilst

the axis of the mountain converges towards our direction, so that in five minutes more we have reduced our distance from the foot of the rocks to four or five hundred yards. We are treading a sandy soil without stones or pebbles. Suddenly, as the wind conveys to our nostrils the stench of a dead camel's carcass lying on the sand a few hundred yards before us, several vultures fly off, abandoning their festival, whilst a magnificent panther, who had been breakfasting in company with them, passes before our eyes without the least alarm or hurry.

"Nemr! Nemr!" (a tiger! a tiger!) shout all our Arabs, whilst two or three dart off in pursuit of the animal, who appears to take things very coolly. The panther looks as if she was creeping rather than running, and, when the horsemen are close upon her, evades them with an enormous spring, and then creeps on again as quietly as before. She repeats this cat-like practice several times; our horsemen find it prudent to turn back, and give up tiring themselves for nothing, The panther quietly disappears in the thicket, and we see no more of her.

By thirty-five minutes past ten we ford a river called El-Merouah, running from south-east to north-west. This is the same watercourse that stopped our progress yesterday. By thirty-nine minutes past ten the sea shore lies about three thousand yards to our left; the black mountain, which we follow nearly in a parallel line, is four hundred yards off to our right, and behind it still rises majestically the Djebel-A'acy. By forty-two minutes past ten the black mountain opens, and forms the Ouad-ez-Zaher, in front of which there is a small elevation composed of gray hillocks. We are still on the sand; and,

by forty-six minutes past ten, the ground is strewed with huge masses of pudding-stone, formed of that beautiful compound known to mineralogists under the name of universal breccia. It consists of a fine conglomerate of green porphyry, in which are imbedded innumerable crystals of granite of all colours. Nobody could tell the original locality of this splendid marble, employed by the ancients in some of their most sumptuous monuments. It is now proved, for the first time, that it came from the mountains of Moab and from the Djebel-A'acy. There are also here other rolled fragments of the celebrated rose-antique porphyry, spotted with white. The Djebel-A'acy contains therefore veins or layers of this rare mineral.

By fifty minutes past ten the pudding-stones have disappeared; we march again over sandy ground, and an enormous crater opens on the side of the Djebel-A'acy. The sea, which by forty-six minutes past ten was two thousand yards distant to our left, is by eleven only seven hundred yards from us. At three minutes past eleven the soil is still sandy, though strewed with large blocks of rolled sandstone grit, veined with variegated tints. By fourteen minutes past eleven we cross a large ravine, the Ouad-Khaderah, with its bed full of boulders of the same stone I have just mentioned. We still march north-east, but the black mountain has retreated; it is now about eight hundred yards off, whilst the sea is only six hundred yards distant to our left. On the opposite shore we descry, immediately facing us, the northern point of the Djebel-el-Melehh. It is now eighteen minutes past eleven, and we are again in a sandy plain.

As soon as the ground before us becomes open, our Arab horsemen are seized, like children, with the mania of

executing a fandango in front of the caravan. They gallop about in all directions, chasing each other at full speed—the pursuer's lance being close to his adversary's back; you would swear that the last will certainly be run through, when lo! just at the critical moment, he turns suddenly round and the chase is reversed. This kind of mock fight, silly enough in reality, excites the Bedouins to enthusiasm, and forms altogether a singular and amusing spectacle.

This time, however, a serious accident interrupts the sport. Mohammed, the wildest of the party, has darted at full speed in pursuit of one of the Scheikhs of the Beni-Sakhar, flourishing his gun, which he handles as if it were a javelin. Suddenly, the Scheikh's horse stumbles, and, recovering himself, clears in a bound a cavity where the sand has given way under his feet. But Mohammed is too late to avoid the danger. The hind legs of his charger sink at once. Horse and rider are beginning to disappear. The rider, without quitting his bridle, tries to disengage his feet from the stirrups, but sinks deeper in the attempt. The unfortunate horse, whilst struggling convulsively to disengage himself from the quicksand, plunges lower and lower. Our infantry hasten to the relief of Mohammed. With daring pertinacity they cling to the head-harness and to the horse's ears, at the risk of being swallowed up with him in the gaping abyss; and, by an effort almost superhuman, drag him from his tomb of sand, when he has already sunk up to the nostrils. By the interference of Providence, all are saved.

Mohammed caresses his charger, who in a moment is covered with foam and perspiration, so great has been his terror. Then he leaps into the saddle again, but henceforth picks his steps more carefully, and seeks the

firmest ground. For several minutes we gazed on this horrid spectacle, which recalled to us the pit in the plain of Sodom, and then resume our march, leaving joyfully behind us the dangerous spot. We have now reached twenty-seven minutes past eleven o'clock.

What would have been the consequence if one of our panther-hunters had met with the same accident which befel Mohammed? Horse and rider would have unavoidably perished in the sand before we could have arrived to render timely assistance.

We enter next on a series of grey hillocks bordering the foot of the mountain with the dark dislocated rocks, the axis of which draws rapidly towards the beach. From thirty-five to forty-two minutes past eleven we march nearly due east. By thirty-eight minutes past eleven we are only twenty yards from the foot of the mountain, and two hundred from the shore; the grey sandy hillocks continue along the beach. By forty minutes past eleven we enter another sandy plain, strewed with large blocks of sandstone grit; and, two minutes later, we halt for breakfast under an acacia.

By a quarter-past twelve we mount our horses again and march in a north-north-east direction. By twenty-five minutes past twelve we are on a muddy beach, distant only twenty yards from the foot of the black rocks. To our left begins a deep selvage of reeds, extending down to the sea-shore, which is not more than two hundred yards from the track. The black rocks extend further than this spot, and behind them appears a high mountain, formed, like the Djebel-A'acy, of red sandstone, torn and dislocated. This mountain now opens to make room for the Ouad-el-Qenaïeh (valley of

the reeds). The mountain itself bears the name of Djebel-el-Qenaïeh.

In front of the spot where the ouad opens, we find on the ground, some fifty yards to the right of our road, a very large round stone, which we take from a distance for the brim of a well; we find this to be in reality an immense quoit, or discus, hewn and ornamented, three yards in diameter and one yard in thickness. This strange stone is broken. What can have been its destination? It resembles nothing fashioned by the Romans, and still less by the Arabs. As far as I can judge, it is a remnant of the condemned Pentapolis.

On leaving the muddy defile we have just crossed, we enter the Rhôr-en-Nemaïreh (morass of the little tiger). A small gulf, three hundred yards wide, borders the southern point of this Rhôr. Close to the gulf the beach is bare of vegetation, but a few yards from the shore the selvage of reeds I have already named begins again. The Djebel-el-Qenaïeh, which we are leaving behind us, is then separated from our road by a plain about five hundred yards in extent, planted with acacias, and bordered, at the foot of the mountain, by hillocks formed of heaped-up fragments of fallen rocks.

By thirty-six minutes past twelve we march northward through the mimosas, five hundred yards distant from the shore, and six hundred from the foot of the mountain. On our right appear the red cliffs of a lofty eminence, called the Djebel-Arraq, the base of which is concealed from us by another mountain, also formed of red rocks. By forty-six minutes past twelve the plain, covered with mimosas, through which we are proceeding, elevates itself a little; and, once on the eminence, we

find ourselves surrounded by immense heaps of rubbish, bearing the name of En-Nemaïreh.

Twenty yards distant to our right there appears, first a mound covered with ruins; then, fifty yards to the left, a square structure measuring six yards on each side, built of large stones, and divided into two rooms. By forty-eight minutes past twelve we are in front of, and four hundred yards distant from, a considerable elevation, covered also with crumbling remnants of buildings. The sea-shore is here a thousand yards to our left. We keep moving through these ruins until fifty-three minutes past twelve, from which it appears they occupy an extent of considerably more than half a mile in length.

By fifty-five minutes past twelve, proceeding north-west, we cross a rivulet of running water, the bed and approaches of which are filled with large rolled boulders. This water-course runs by four different ravines; beyond it begins the Sahel-en-Nemaïreh, limited eastward by a mountain, the rocks of which are grey at the base and red at the summit. The foot of this mountain is six hundred yards distant from our track, which has turned north again. By three minutes past one we reach another rivulet, beyond which are other ruins, including a structure situated fifty yards from our road. This is a square building, flanked at the four angles by towers, forming now four distinct heaps of ruins. The Arabs call this structure Bordj-en-Nemaïreh. A little further on we perceive, about four hundred yards distant from the road, another ruined building, square in shape, but smaller than the preceding one.

By ten minutes past one we cross a plain covered with mimosas, and strewed with large rolled pebbles.

From where we pass the sea is distant nine hundred yards, and the foot of the mountain only four hundred. We had now reached the northern extremity of the Rhôr-en-Nemaïreh. The mountain we are coasting is furrowed by a ravine, probably that by which the pebbles we see strewing the ground have been carried down. Towards this point, the side of the mountain presents a large stain of green and violet, one above the other; from a distance this stain has the appearance, on a very large scale, of certain beds or layers of rainbow-coloured marls, such as are common in the east of France. Here the beach narrows very rapidly, so that by twenty-one minutes past one we are only one hundred and fifty yards distant from the foot of the mountain, and four hundred from the sea-shore. At this point a frowning ravine presents itself, called the Ouad-es-Souêeb (the rocky valley). Soon after this we cross the bed of the torrent coming out of the ouad. It is full of rolled blocks of sandstone grit.

From the Bordj-en-Nemaïreh our route has been north-north-east, and we keep marching in this direction until thirty-one minutes past one. Here the mountain is only one hundred and fifty yards distant; the sea one hundred yards from us when we enter the thicket of reeds bordering the shore. The beach keeps narrowing still, and by thirty-nine minutes past one we are only ten yards distant from the water, and close to the very foot of a hill covered with large boulders, a kind of spur projecting from a high range of mountains. The ground of the defile we are passing through is strewed with blocks of greyish stone, rendering the progress of our horses difficult and dangerous. The defile itself is known by the Arabs by the name of El-Meraïced (which means the Cut-throat).

Numerous other ravines are seen furrowing the side of the hill round which we are winding.

By fifty minutes past one we march north-north-east, and three minutes later, north-north-west. Here the beach is about eighty yards wide, and the mountain one hundred and twenty yards distant from our road. All this ground is planted with mimosas, and the shore is everywhere fringed with its large selvage of reeds following the windings of the beach. We next arrive in face of another ouad, going up towards the Land of Moab, and called Talâa-Semâan or Sebâan ; with the Djebel-es-Salth forming its northern flank. We then re-enter the thicket, whilst we proceed north-west. This thicket is composed of thorny trees and bushes, which have procured for it its name of Esal (the Thorny Trees).

By fifteen minutes past two we are in front of the Ouad-el-Esal, which terminates twelve hundred yards to our right. One hundred yards to our left begins the reedy border, of nearly the same breadth at this place. We halt here a few minutes, and a little before half-past two start again towards the north-north-east, through the acacias. The foot of the mountain flanking to the north the Ouad-el-Esal is now at the distance of a thousand yards, whilst the border of reeds has retreated to about two hundred and fifty yards from our road.

By thirty-seven minutes past two, we cross a pretty rivulet of running water. By forty minutes past two, we pass between the tents of an encampment of the Beni-Sakhar ; and seven minutes later, we finally arrive at a second encampment, established at the place more especially called El-Esal, and in front of the opening of another valley called by some Ouad-Katzrabba, and by others Ouad-Katz-

roubba. We are amongst friends, and therefore determine to halt here for the remainder of the day and the night.

On our arrival, we feel at once, from the respectful manner of all who surround us, that the protection of the three Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs, if it does not entirely rid us of the annoyance of Bedouin curiosity, is still a great advantage. We have never before been treated with such deference in the desert. The heat is excessive, much more so than on the western shore. We feel as if we were in a furnace; though the seïmoum has nothing to do with the temperature from which we are suffering.

We take advantage of the remaining daylight, to hunt sedulously for insects, which abound under the stones, in company with the finest black scorpions I have ever seen. Some of them are nearly as large as crawfish; but notwithstanding their personal pretensions, we invariably make them pay for the alarm they cause us, every time we come upon them unawares.

The roses of Jericho (*Anastatica hierichuntica*) are found here in great plenty; they are deeply rooted in the soil on which they live their short existence. All, owing to the dry season, are crisped and shrivelled up; and their colour, resembling that of the ground, makes it rather difficult to discover them. We proceed to collect an ample provision of these flowers.

At dark we return to camp, where we enjoy the most complete repose and security. After dinner, when our day's work is over, and while quietly smoking our tchibouks, we try to ascertain what city it may have been the vast ruins of which we have passed through. Their Arab name of Kharbet-en-Nemaïreh, makes us at first think of Gomorrah, the A'amoura of the Scriptures

and of the Arabs; but the significative term of En-Nemaïreh compels us soon to alter our opinion. I cannot discover anything more than a delusive analogy between the two denominations. We must then look for something else. Has there existed in this place a city of any size at a period more recent than the destruction of the Pentapolis? This is possible.

In the Onomasticon of Eusebius, we read at the word Νεμηρίμ (instead of Νεκηρίμ), that Βενναμαρήμ was a town of the Moabites, situated northward of Zoar. Saint Jerome transcribes the name Benamerium. The sound of Bennamarim is so very like that of En-Nemaïreh, that I have no doubt the Moabitic station mentioned in that passage was really a village of no great importance, built on the site of the ruins of Zeboiim. At any rate, the town mentioned by Eusebius cannot be the Nimrim, situated twenty leagues from that place on the eastern bank of the Jordan. That town is to the north of Jericho, and Eusebius would certainly not have made use of the indication *northward of Zouera*, to determine its position.

There is another village named Λονείθ, which Eusebius places μεταξύ Αροπόλεως καὶ Σοορῶν, between Areopolis (Rabbath-Moab, er-Rabbah) and Zouera. The site of En-Nemaïreh would suit perfectly with the situation of Luhith; for the ancient road from er-Rabbah to Zouera passes by the Ouad-ebni-Hammid. But there are other ruins to be mentioned shortly, which may claim the honour of having belonged to the Luhith of Eusebius.

After this first inquiry, we remained completely in doubt as to the proper identification of these extensive ruins; it was only on our return, and after having traversed the frowning crater which commands this

district, and passing other ruins which strew the ground from the Talâa-Semâan to Sebâan, I was compelled naturally to suppose that we were treading the site of the Zeboiim of the Scriptures.

I will add but one word more: these ruins, previously noted by Irby and Mangles, and since visited by Lynch, have been erroneously taken by these travellers for the ruins of Zoar. We need only read in Genesis the narrative concerning the destruction of Sodom and the flight of Lot, to remain perfectly satisfied that Zoar—where Lot, who had left Sodom by break of day, arrived at sunrise—cannot possibly be looked for on the opposite shore of the Dead Sea, and still less at the Kharbet-en-Nemaïreh. For, were we to agree with the indefensible hypothesis of the sudden formation and rise of the Dead Sea, there would still remain, as the crow flies, several leagues between Sodom and the pretended Zoar. However rapid might have been the flight of Lot with his daughters, it would have been impossible for them to accomplish one-tenth part of the distance between these two points in the short interval that takes place in this country between dawn and sunrise. This question appears to me to be settled beyond dispute or mistake, except on the part of those who have not visited the localities, and wish to remain in error. For myself, being now as well acquainted as any one with the shores of the Dead Sea and the adjacent countries, I am convinced that it is Zeboiim we are to look for in the ruins of Talâa-Sebâan, and Bennamarim at the Kharbet-en-Nemaïreh, which is evidently an appendage of the ruins of Zeboiim. And lastly, if we are to judge by the vast extent of these ruins, Zeboiim was at least

as large a city as Sodom. At a later period of this journey I discovered the exact site of Gomorrah, a site visited by many pilgrims, but always mistaken until this day. But let me not anticipate.

Our night has been excellent; and a sound sleep has restored our ardour and our cheerfulness. Up to this moment, everything has succeeded to our wishes, and we must be thankful to Divine Providence for the manifest protection which has smoothed the difficulties of so hazardous a journey.

January 15th.

This morning by dawn I have taken ample observations of all the important points on both shores of the Dead Sea; and, while noting down many names, I have extracted as much information as possible from the tribe of the Beni-Sakhar with whom we are dwelling.

We are here on the peninsula called from earliest antiquity, as at the present day, el-Lisan (the Tongue). We find it mentioned in the Bible at verse 2 of the 15th chapter of Joshua, when treating of the territorial limits of the tribe of Judah: "And their south border was from the shore of the Salt Sea, from the Tongue* that looked southward." It appears very unlikely that the sacred writer should have designated by the word Tongue (הלשון), the shallow bay or gulf forming the southern extremity of the Dead Sea; for then that limit would necessarily have crossed or coasted the Salt Mountain, which is nowhere asserted. I prefer reading in that expression the modern *Lisan* of the Arabs, meaning the

* In the English version, the word *tongue* is rendered *bay;* but the Hebrew is more literally translated, according to M. de Saulcy, by the former term.—TRANSLATOR.

southern point of the peninsula. Supposing the contrary, why give two designations to the same terminations of the sea? In so concise a narrative, one was enough. I therefore conclude that the inspired writer meant that the southern limit of the territory of Judah began towards the extremity of the Salt Sea, from the *tongue* of land looking southward; that is to say, from a point situated opposite the peninsula. What further proves this is, that the following verse mentions that from this point the limit proceeds southward, towards the mountain of Akrabim. The pass of Akrabim (or of the Scorpions) may very well be taken for the Ouad-ez-Zouera, according to the opinion already expressed by Mr. De Berton. To return from the extremity of the Dead Sea to the Ouad-ez-Zouera, it would have been necessary to coast the Salt Mountain going northward, which is not mentioned. Besides, when in the fifth verse of the same chapter the writer treats of the northern limit of the same tribe, we read, "And the east border was the Salt Sea even unto the end of Jordan, and their border in the north quarter was from the bay (*tongue*) of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan." Since, in this passage, the northern gulf is explicitly named the tongue of the sea, I conclude that in the former passage, where we only find the word *tongue*, without the specific and precise addition of *the sea*, it really meant a tongue *of land*,* and consequently that the point designated is the one still called *Lisan* at the present day. In verse 19 of chapter xviii., we read again of the same gulf under this form, the bay (*tongue*) of the Salt Sea.

* Cohen, in his commentary on the 2nd verse, chap. xv., writes: "A tongue of land; in Chaldean, a rock. So we both agree as to the precise meaning which should be given here to the isolated word, "*tongue*."

There was anciently a road going across the peninsula; this road, the memory of which has been handed down by tradition, was called Dharb-el-Lisan, but it exists no more. The Bedouins who accompany us are unanimous in asserting that no ruins are to be found in the centre of the peninsula.

Whilst I am busy taking notes and collecting information, a tumult arises behind me in the camp; I run to inquire what it is, and find one of our moukris quarrelling with one of Abou-Daouk's Djahalins. The Bedouin, who has been trying to pilfer something, finding himself rudely grappled by our muleteer, has seized his khandjar and prepares to stab him. Mohammed springs up, interposes, and is pushed back; he then draws his pistol coolly and is going to shoot the Bedouin. I arrive just in time to stop him. But all the Djahalins have been attracted by the noise; I apprehended they would side with their compatriot, and am rather surprised, I confess, to see them without hesitation loading him with maledictions for having attempted to rob the people who had taken them into pay. Not content with that, they expel him disgracefully, pelting him with stones. I shall never forget this scene; stones as large as a man's fist were hurled at the head and shoulders of the unfortunate wretch, who, without uttering a complaint, slowly retired and disappeared in the thicket. To have asked pardon for him might have been a bad example; I therefore allowed the justice of the Djahalins to take its course, though shuddering with horror at the sight of such an immediate and severe chastisement.

I saw this man no more; and trust he has not perished miserably in the Rhôr! Wounded, without food, driven

from the tents of his tribe, to which he was perhaps forbid to return, I much fear his wanderings were soon ended.

I was still under the strong emotion produced by this sample of Arab manners, when Samet Aly and Selameh came up, with the brother of the latter, a fine handsome man, about thirty-five years old, and Scheikh of the encampment where we have just passed the night, to invite me to take coffee in the tent of the last-named gentleman. I went with them at once, and found in a spacious tent, furnished with mats and carpets, but quite open to the east, a numerous company of distinguished members of the tribe of the Beni-Sakhar. The Scheikhs all wore under their abayas the long scarlet robe, which seems a mark of supremacy. Our cavaliers, Hamdan and Abou-Daouk at their head, were already collected in the tent, and I was welcomed with every mark of politeness and civility.

After the pipes, coffee was introduced; but what coffee! The liquor I was compelled to swallow under this false name was an absolute decoction of cloves. Of course I looked as if I thought it delicious, and the conversation turned upon France. I was asked hundreds of questions on the power and resources of the country, the number of our armies, guns, cavalry, and ships. Every moment came in the magical name of *Bounabarteh*, and I had much difficulty in explaining to my hearers the meaning of a republic! "Why! how! you have no sultan!" exclaimed they, with one voice. "Impossible! But you cannot go on so! you must have a sultan! A country without a sultan is like a horse without a rider, or a tribe without a scheikh." I did not try to persuade them that a different system might succeed with

us; for I should have infallibly wasted, if not my Latin, the little Arabic of which I am master.

The proverb says, "the best friends must part," so I took leave of my kind hosts and turned back to our own encampment, carrying away with me numerous living tokens of the hospitality I had been honoured with. I verily believe that every one of the gentlemen present at the interview, had liberally presented me with some of the inmates of his inner dress,—acquisitions not easily got rid of, and increasing in number as often as we repeated our visits.

At a few minutes before nine we resumed our march, proceeding nearly due north, but inclining a little to the west. The entrance of the Ouad-Katzrabba is about eight hundred yards distant, to the right of the encampment we are just leaving. On the left begins immediately a low jungle, extending about two hundred yards deep. Beyond that appears the usual border of reeds lining the shore. We are now facing the bottom of the gulf, formed by the southern point of the peninsula of El-Lisan or El Mazrâah, for both names are given to it indifferently. Numerous acacias are scattered here and there in the sandy soil of the plain, which divides us from the foot of the mountains of Moab. Two ravines furrow the side of the mountain nearest to us. The first supplies issue to the Ouad-Katzrabba; the other has no particular name that I can ascertain.

A high mountain rises in the distance. By five minutes past nine, we are opposite the highest point of the eminence limiting the plain eastward; and almost immediately opens, to our right, the Ouad-el-Esal. Beyond the bed of the torrent proceeding from this

ouad, which in the rainy season sweeps along masses of rolled pebbles, strewing the plain, furrowed by numerous ravines, we march over ground covered with small jungle. This ground is bounded eastward, and at the distance of only a few hundred yards, by low eminences of grey sand, and westward by mounds of a whitish colour, similar to those at Sebbeh, their chain beginning something less than two miles to our left.

By sixteen minutes past nine we are nearly at the foot of the sandy eminences on our right. These seem to have had their sides cleft perpendicularly, and conceal from us, at intervals, the high mountains of Moab. By half-past nine we cross a considerable ravine, the bed of which issues out of the eminences on the right, and enter a small plain strewed with rolled pebbles and planted with mimosas. Its level is higher than that of the peninsula. The range of white sandy mounds covering the peninsula draws rapidly near us, and in ten minutes our road takes us through them, whilst we keep on still marching due north.

By thirty-two minutes past nine we pass close to a large antique cistern, square in shape, and twenty-eight yards long on either side. The eastern face is connected with a conduit or canal built of large stones, which turns off suddenly at right angles towards the north, and is traceable to a considerable distance.

By forty-one minutes past nine the mounds divide before us, and form a small oblong plain, three hundred yards long by one hundred and fifty yards wide. By forty-three minutes past nine we fall in again with the crumbling hillocks, so frequently encountered since our leaving Sebbeh, along both sides of the Dead Sea. We

then proceed for about three minutes north-north-east, and at forty-six minutes past nine we incline to north-north-west, and keep this course for a considerable time. Nearly five miles distant to our right is a cluster of high mountains, forming the group of the Djebel-Kharadjeh, or Kharazeh, according to the different pronunciations of our Bedouins.

By forty-eight minutes past nine we cross a small valley about sixty yards in width, filled with brambles and mimosas. This valley is bounded towards the north by a small water-course, fringed with many trees. Beyond we meet again the white mounds, but now observe on every one of them the red stains of volcanic ejections, which we had remarked on the opposite shore, as establishing the existence of craters.

The country through which we are now passing is called Ardh-el-Esal (the Land of Prickly Shrubs). By fifty-five minutes past nine we cross another ravine. Beyond commences a plain besprinkled with pebbles and brambles, lying between the grey mounds at the foot of the high mountains, and those covering nearly the whole of the peninsula. The first commence at one hundred and fifty yards to our right, the others are distant nearly a mile and a half. The seyals, or mimosas, continue to display themselves in great numbers.

By nine minutes past ten we reach the bed of a rivulet lined with thick brambles. The mounds are then distant two hundred yards to the right, and a thousand yards to the left. We have altered our direction once more, bearing now north-north-east. The vast level we are entering is called the plain of El-Mezrâah. Ruins similar to those of En-Nemaïreh appear to our right; they are called

Emthaïl. By twenty minutes past ten we pass three rivulets close to each other, running between mimosas, through grounds which have been well cultivated. We then fall in with other ruins on the left ; these are known to the Arabs by the name of Kharbet-es-Saïetbeh.

By twenty-six minutes past ten we are only two hundred and fifty yards distant from the foot of an immense perpendicular rock, commanding, on its northern bank, a large valley that winds westward through the high mountains. This valley is the Ouad-el-Karak, called also the Ouad-ed-Drâa, from the name of the beautiful water-course flowing from it and fertilising the plain of El-Mezrâah. Along the foot of the cliffs are scattered other ruins named by the Arabs Taouahin-es-Soukkar (the Sugar Mills). At this point a large well-watered plain opens in our front, bounded on the west by the grey mounds, and distant five or six thousand yards : this is the Rhôr-el-Mezrâah.

We lose several minutes examining the ground and crossing several rivulets, and stop at last for breakfast, by thirty-two minutes past ten, on the banks of the stream called Nahr-ed-Drâa (the River of the Arm), precisely opposite the spot where the Ouad-el-Karak opens.

Whilst we are breakfasting, some of our Arabs take advantage of the opportunity to indulge in a bath. They strip and plunge into the stream ; but, as the stream is our only decanter, we request our friends to have the goodness to perform their ablutions a little lower down,—a request that seems greatly to surprise them. They think us absurdly fastidious and delicate ; but they comply, and we require no more.

After our temperate repast we explore the ground we have halted on, and obtain an ample collection of insects,

and some pretty little flowering plants. We would willingly remain much longer, but our Scheikhs, who have no great taste for botany, urge us so anxiously to resume our march, that we mount again by thirty-nine minutes past eleven.

Yesterday's heat was nothing compared with that of to-day, and the July sun in France is seldom as fierce as that the rays of which are scorching us here on the fifteenth of January. We march north-north-west through continued ruins. Twelve hundred yards distant to our right the white hillocks appear again, commanded by the summits of the Djebel-Adjerrah ; these last appear to be nearly nine miles distant from our road.

At forty-eight minutes past eleven we are proceeding exactly north-west, and still through ruins. By fifty-six minutes past eleven, after having resumed our former course, and gone through cultivated grounds with stubbles of Doura still standing in them, we cross a running stream, similar to the one near which we halted this morning, and bearing the same name, Ed-Drâa. This appears to be a second branch of the stream flowing from the Ouad-el-Karak, and carrying fertility throughout the Rhôr-el-Mezrâah. This stream, before we cross it, runs for some time parallel to our route, viz., in a north-north-westerly direction ; then, beyond the ford, it turns westward to reach the sea. On the opposite bank a plain opens, strewed with rolled pebbles, and tolerably well planted with trees. The mimosas and *Areqs* show themselves again amongst thickets and dense brambles : this kind of woody region extends about two thousand yards to our right.

During the next quarter of an hour we fall in with other

rivulets running from east to west. Since mid-day we are marching in a close jungle, like that of the Rhôr-Safieh, and in which the *Asclepia procera* appears again in great profusion. Another wooded plain is pointed out to the north, nearly two miles distant, and called El-Hadits. Our Arabs, who hold the Rhaouarnas of El-Mezrâah in great contempt, tell me that we are in the Rhôr of the Beni-Oqbâ,—in their opinion a much nobler tribe than that of the miserable Bedouins, half fellahs, who dwell in this place, Heaven only can tell how! In their eyes, all who do not live a wandering life are low and miserable wretches.

By a quarter past twelve, after having crossed the last-mentioned rivulet, beyond which the ground is riddled with holes and gaps, such as are usually found where temporary fortifications have been erected, we come up to a kind of village, composed of tents and huts of mud and boughs: this is the permanent station El-Mezrâah, where dwell, throughout the year, the Arabs of the poor tribe of Rhaouarna. Here we alight, and our tents are hastily pitched; the sun is insufferably oppressive, and we hope for shelter under our ordinary canvas roof. But we are scarcely able to remain within. We gasp for breath, and, to exercise our usual avocations, are obliged to throw aside our clothes. In a few minutes we are invaded by our new hosts. These are accomplished thieves, and their constant attempts at larceny produce continual quarrels and misunderstandings. I feel little inclined to leave the tent, but our companions proceed to shoot some turtle-doves in the immediate neighbourhood. I have advised them not to venture far, for fear of accidents, as I have no great confidence in our position.

A sort of Scheikh in rags proves a convenient ally, by driving away from time to time, with a stout cudgel, the rascals who keep perpetually gliding in amongst us in search of any plunder they can lay their hands on. Violent and continued disputes ensue. First, leathern girths and holsters are carried off from our saddles; then poultry, bread, tobacco, and even the provision of dry wood which our Arabs have brought for the kitchen and bivouac fires. All this bodes some gathering mischief, and I look with anxiety on the probable consequences.

My companions soon return, dissatisfied and disappointed. I mention my apprehensions, and warn them to see that their arms are in good order, and to be on the alert in case of any nocturnal alarm.

Night has closed in, and all remains perfectly calm. The intruders have retired to their huts, and some who had obstinately installed themselves in our kitchen are expelled without ceremony. Dinner is at last announced. and all do honour to the meal with their accustomed appetite.

Towards eight o'clock we are all at work, dreaming of no interruption, when suddenly a tremendous noise bursts out in all directions. Each of us lays down his pen to listen. At that moment Ahouad rushes in with flashing eyes, crying loudly, "Ya sidy, khod el baroudy!" ("My lord, take your gun.") I needed no second warning. All our friends understand him, and scarcely require the word "to arms!" which I repeat whilst snatching up my own weapon. In less time than I take to relate it, we were all in front of the tent.

At this moment the tumult would have drowned the noise of thunder. Amidst clouds of dust, under the

finest moonlight in the world, the men are shouting, the dogs yelling louder than the men, and the women screaming their horrid howl, still louder than the dogs, lou-lou-lou-lou, which they send forth when they are either sad or joyful, and also as a war-cry to stimulate the martial ardour of their husbands. It is plain we are attacked: by whom, and with what object? We know not exactly, but we may guess. The Rhaouarnas are tired of robbing us in detail, and have made up their minds to summary proceedings and a general massacre.

Our position is critical. If vanquished, we are lost; at any hazard we must struggle for a decisive victory.

Mohammed and some of our Thâameras are near us; Mohammed remains calm and collected; the Arabs are in a fever of excitement; matchlocks, yataghans, and khandjars are handled convulsively, waiting for the moment to strike through thick and thin. Our moukris themselves feel there is no hope but in the defeat of our enemies, and each has grasped at anything within reach, in the shape of a weapon. One of them, named Beitouny, an honest fellow who does nothing but sleep and laugh, and who up to this moment has evinced no capabilities for anything else, brandishes something like the trunk of a tree, with which he is ready to knock down at a blow ten of these rascally Rhaouarnas.

The Nubian, Selim, of whom I have already spoken more than once, does not at all approve of the decided attitude of our moukris. He thinks it may inflame even more highly the anger of the assailants, and tries to persuade Beitouny to keep quiet. He even endeavours to disarm him of his club; but Schariar having elected

himself commander-in-chief of the moukris, is standing bravely at their head with a drawn sword in his hand, and with a hearty cuff sends poor Selim staggering off to the distance of at least ten paces.

The noise increases; from time to time we descry, through the dust, a horsman gesticulating like a demon. Our friends are in the saddle, and have commenced operations.

Whilst they are tilting vigorously against the Rhaouarnas, I draw up our forces on a single line, a few paces distant from each other, so as to allow perfect freedom to all their motions, and I recommend, more strenuously than ever, prudence and self-possession. I forbid them to fire a single shot until I set the example; and we wait our turn to join in the dance. Edward is my left-hand man. We shake hands as I whisper to him that our position seems desperate, and we must be prepared to sell our lives as dearly as we can. "Be content," is the answer of the brave lad, "I shall die as I ought."

In a few minutes, however, the yells decrease, then cease suddenly; the dust evaporates, and all our Arabs, one after the other, range themselves round us. None are missing, but their swords are red with blood, and it is pretty clear they have not been in idle hands.

The brother of Selameh, the same who had offered me coffee in the morning, is the most excited of the party. He takes me by the hand and says, smiling—"All is over, now; a few good sabre cuts have settled the business. Fear nothing, thou art our friend, and we are here to defend thee." Abou-Daouk comes in last: he laughs louder than ever as he returns his sword to the scabbard. Hamdan, if possible, laughs less than usual.

"What is all this about?" I inquire. "What has happened?" Abou-Daouk explains. Two emissaries from the tribe of Beni-Oqbâ have come to claim, with offensive hauteur, the right to protect us, which means, of course, to give another squeeze to our money bags. They have had the impudence to announce that, if their demands are not complied with, they will prevent us from passing through their territory. Our friends answered that we would ride over them, sword in hand; and thereupon, kicked out the ambassadors, with a few supplementary cuts across the face.

We thought it rather odd that a battle where the hostile army numbered only two men, should have occasioned such a dreadful clatter, and that Ahouad on so paltry an alarm should have shouted to us all to prepare for action. We had good reason to be astonished, for the whole story told by Abou-Daouk proved to be a fable, and nothing else. It was not until some time after that we learned the truth. The fact was, the entire tribe of the Rhaouarnas had conspired to plunder our camp; but our friends were vigilant, and the few hundreds of badly armed banditti, who had hoped to meet with little or no resistance from a handful of wearied travellers, had been so rudely received with sword and lance, that they had deemed it more prudent to give way and abandon their benevolent design. Besides, they knew that by persevering, they would ultimately bring down upon them the whole tribe of the Beni-Sakhars, which would surely end in the extermination of their miserable village. Accordingly, as soon as the most daring had been disposed of, the remainder fled in all directions; the wounded to bathe and bind up their cuts and bruises, the others to lie down

in their tents and look as innocent and unconcerned as if they had in no manner been mixed up with the skirmish.

As soon as quiet is restored again, our friends are laughing and chatting merrily round the fires, whilst not a sound is heard in the direction of the village. We visit the bivouacs, thanking our Arabs, who look quite delighted at the opportunity of proving their fidelity. As we think, however, that it is wiser still to depend upon ourselves, we decide to mount guard by turns. Soon the sentry on duty is the only man awake ; the others sleep within reach of their weapons, as calmly as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Our vigilance proved superfluous, for the night, enlivened by a brilliant moon, was disturbed no more by any untoward incident.

January 16th.

When we rise this morning, the skirmish of last night appears to be forgotten ; the Rhaouarnas are much less numerous round our camp, and those who venture in have become polite and obliging. They contrive to extort from us now, by dint of beggary, some tobacco, but nothing more. The ragged Scheikh, who thrashed his subjects yesterday with such good-will, is the only one who comes to chat with us, and as every labourer deserves his reward, we present him with twenty piastres. The rate is less than a halfpenny a blow, and this is the first time that we have traded in Bedouin merchandise on such fair conditions.

We are anxious to get off, but as we still give credit to Abou-Daouk's invention concerning the Beni-Oqbâs, we suspect an ambuscade from the tribe whose pretensions have been so haughtily rejected, and we prepare

accordingly. Papigny especially excites our mirth, as he arranges as many cartridges as he can, within reach of his hand. "Laugh, laugh," says he, "but you don't know these rascals; there's always a nest of them in every bush, and you'll hear the balls whistle sooner than you may like."

Luckily the Beni-Oqbâs thought lightly of the blows they had received, and Papigny's prophecy, though a wise one, was not realised.

By six minutes past eight we were all in the saddle, taking short leave of the hosts who had received us with such hospitality. We marched at first through the copse of *Asclepias* and *Areqs* in a north-north-easterly direction. The sea-shore is there four hundred yards to our left, where it forms a small gulf. From ten to twenty-five minutes past eight we turn east-north-east; from sixteen to twenty-three minutes past eight the thicket becomes very dense; we then emerge from it upon a beach covered with brambles, only two hundred yards wide between us and the shore. By twenty-five minutes past eight we cross a muddy ravine, beyond which is a small sandy plain saturated with water. Shortly afterwards we enter again the thicket of *Areq* trees.

By thirty-three minutes past eight the road begins to ascend; and by forty-three minutes past eight we wind along a ravine bounded by a wall, which turns off at right angles to our left, winding by the right around a hillock, the summit of which, two hundred yards distant from us, is surmounted by the ruins of a tower. On this side of the wall are heaps of rubbish similar to those of En-Nemaïreh. By forty-five minutes past eight we cross another wall, and have on our right another hillock, upon

which appear the ruins of two square buildings. These ruins are named Kharbet-abd-er-Rahim. The heaps of rubbish are numerous throughout the whole extent of ground over which we are marching, and also upon the eminence around the two square enclosures.

By forty-six minutes past eight, we enter a large ravine abundantly grown over with reeds and willows (*Salix Babylonica*), through which runs a river, named Seil-Ouad-ebni-Hammid (the Torrent of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid). Ten minutes are required to ford this stream after having followed its bed for some time ; and by fifty-eight minutes past eight we reach the other bank. We then enter a valley shut in between perpendicular rocks. This is the Ouad-el-Djerrah or Adjerrah. I was unable to make out the exact orthography of this word, though from what I recollect of the sound, I prefer the last form.

Before starting, we had held a council with the Scheikhs of our escort, for the purpose of selecting the route we were to follow throughout the day. They told us that it was practicable enough to push on as far as the bank of the Ouad-el-Moudjeb, meaning the Arnon ; but that we should not be able to ford that river ; and besides, were we to succeed, we should find beyond it a beach so narrow as to be impassable ; and finally, the Jordan too much swollen to cross at this season of the year. These sound reasons concurring with our desire to visit the Land of Moab, determined us to proceed to the high country, and to enter the Moabitic mountains by the Ouad-Adjerrah.

I know not whether the assertion of our Scheikhs can be thoroughly depended on ; all that I can affirm is,

that looking from a distance towards the points where the Ouad-el-Moudjeb and the Ouad-Zerka-Mayn terminate, the mountains seem to dip into the Dead Sea, without any intermediate beach; all green vegetation ceasing beyond the wooded plain which I have already spoken of, and which is named El-Hadits. In other respects there would have been no difficulty in reaching the southern bank of the Ouad-el-Moudjeb; and from El-Mezrâah, a march of two hours at the utmost would have been enough to take us there.

The Ouad-Adjerrah, at the place where we have entered it, opens directly eastward, and we begin our ascent immediately, following all its windings. Our road is merely a ravine, choked with gravel; that is to say, the bed of an actual torrent, on the right and left of which appear rather high eminences. By five minutes past nine we march east-south-east, to resume, a few minutes later, our course due-east.

We keep advancing across lofty eminences, reaching their crest by nine minutes past nine. We are then between four and five miles distant from a high mountain, the brown rocks of which are split as if they had been rent by fire. To our left is an elevated plain overspread with white mounds, and inclining towards the Dead Sea, Before us is an abrupt valley, one hundred yards deep at the least, and two hundred yards wide, turning towards the east-north-east. This is called the Ouad-ebni-Hammid.

By sixteen minutes past nine, we find on our road a ruined tower, at the precise spot where the road makes a sudden elbow towards the south to wind round the basis of a pointed cliff of brown, rent rock. By twenty-

two minutes past nine we cross the ruins of an ancient wall, beyond which begin to appear the continued vestiges of a paved road, flanked right and left upon all the neighbouring eminences with ruins of towers and structures, intended evidently as defensive fortifications to protect the country to which this road gave access. I have no doubt that the Roman way leading from Jerusalem to Areopolis passed by the Ouad-ebni-Hammid, which was occupied by military stations throughout its whole extent.

At half-past nine we are still marching eastward, and we wind along, at the distance of only fifteen yards, the needle-shaped, rent sides of a dark-coloured rock. Right and left appear incessantly the ruins of defensive posts or towers, which formerly intercepted the passage, connected frequently by walls. By thirty-seven minutes past nine we come to a small eminence, two hundred yards in extent, at the entrance of which, to the left of the road, appears the foundation of a large round tower, called El-Bordj. On the eminence, and behind a wall that borders the road, are the ruins of six towers, four of which are disposed in a straight line parallel to the wall, and the two others at about eighty yards behind.

Beyond this eminence, upon which we halt a quarter of an hour to allow the entire caravan to come up, there commences a descent which is again a fragment of an ancient road. At fifty-six minutes past eight we leave the eminence to descend into the bed of a torrent, ten yards wide at the utmost, along the bottom of which we proceed, at first east-north-east, then east. After a defile between perpendicular rocks, which we have gone through by three minutes past ten, we enter upon another flat eminence dotted with mounds, and commanded right and

left by large hillocks, strewed, as well as the eminence itself, with numerous heaps of rubbish.

By seven minutes past ten we are in front of a ruined tower, situated on our left. By a quarter past ten, proceeding north-east, we cross a stony eminence extending to the right up to the foot of a low hill. To our left is a hillock covered with rubbish, after which rises the Djebel-Adjerrah, a high mountain with its sides sprinkled over with those volcanic ejections we have already so often mentioned. By seventeen minutes past ten we descend into another ravine, the entrance of which is flanked right and left by two round towers in ruins, and we keep following from this moment the bed of the torrent.

By nineteen minutes past ten we march north-north-west; and five minutes later, almost due north. We have then, to the right, high stony hillocks, and a large round tower in ruins interrupts the course of the ravine. By twenty-nine minutes past ten our course is again eastward, and we keep moving in this direction until thirty-five minutes past ten, when we turn to the left with the ravine, which along this elbow is bounded by perpendicular rocks; and then again we almost immediately resume our easterly direction. By forty minutes past ten we are in front of another military post, consisting of a square tower in ruins.

We now leave the bed of the torrent, to wind along its bank. High, rounded hills appear to our right. By forty-four minutes past ten we fall in again with the traces of the ancient road; they are commanded by the ruins of a tower on the right. We then cross the ravine we have just left, and which inclines eastward towards a high mountain, the base of which is only three hundred

yards distant from our route. Once over the ravine, the road ascends by a few zig-zags up an eminence, the crest of which we gain by forty-nine minutes past ten. Here are some Arab tombs, formed simply of piles of stones. We coast along the flank of a deep ouad sixty yards wide, our direction being then easterly.

By fifty-one minutes past ten we find fresh vestiges of the ancient road. We are then marching north-east, and still on the left bank of the ouad, into which another water-course precipitates itself from the west. A range of high hills, connected with the mountain I have just mentioned, ends here in high rounded cliffs. The ouad has become the bed of a formidable torrent, and the old road appears again. We then descend into the bed of the torrent, which inclines eastward, and is bounded on the left by perpendicular rocks. At eleven o'clock we halt under the rocks to take our morning's meal.

As we are anxious now to get over the ground as fast as possible, we resume our march by twenty-five minutes past eleven. The direction of the torrent we are following is at first south-east, but it soon turns due-east again. By thirty-one minutes past eleven we ascend the left bank, where we once more meet the ancient road. The other bank is formed of high ridges. Four minutes later we are down again into the ouad, where we cross the opening of another ravine running into it, exactly from north to south. We then pass along a small green plain commanded by high ridges. The valley along which we are marching is not deep, but covered with stones. To our left, at a distance of forty yards at the utmost, commences a series of hillocks and grey mounds.

By fifty-two minutes past eleven the hills open to the

right, forming in the interval a moderate-sized valley, at the further end of which we descry a steep high cliff commanding the hills on either side. By fifty-seven minutes past eleven, our route, which had been until then due-east, inclines by almost insensible degrees to the north. Just then we are passing to the left some calcined rocks, which are succeeded almost immediately by a small eminence covered with large stones. To the right, and about one hundred yards off, is a range of high hills, through which we are to pass by a stony ravine, running east-north-east. By nine minutes past twelve the remains of the old road appear again, passing between two square structures completely in ruins.

By fifteen minutes past twelve we are at the lowest point of the ravine, and the paved road still continues in broken fragments. We march then north-east, in a narrow pass, bounded on the left by calcined rocks, and full of stones. By twenty-one minutes past twelve we ascend a hill immediately before us, with abrupt ravines an each side. The old road, the traces of which it is impossible to mistake, accompanies us still.

We encounter now a drove of camels, attended by Bedouins, who are riding very comfortably, whilst their wives follow on foot. The new comers are perfectly inoffensive, and exchange the *salam-aleikoum*, the usual greeting of the desert.

By twenty-eight minutes past twelve we have to our right the ruin of a square tower, close to which is a deep well, shaped like a funnel pipe, called Bir-el-Hafayeh. We reach this well by thirty-two minutes past twelve. Two hundred yards further on is another well of the same shape, and bearing the same name. Before us, and

at something less than two miles distance, is a range of high mountains, called the Djebel-en-Nouêhin (or Nouêhid), forming the upper ridge of the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, and from the level of which commences the vast plain of Moab. As we are told that in this elevated region we shall find neither springs nor wells, we are obliged to take in a supply of water at the Bir-el-Hafayeh, with which our moukris proceed to fill our barrels and goat-skins. This operation, on account of the depth of the well, occupies more time than we could desire.

We have clambered up a small eminence situated just above the two wells ; and there, to divert our patience while waiting for the start of the caravan, we look for insects under the stones lying amongst the mallows that cover the ground. At thirty-eight minutes past one, we are allowed to resume our march. During this halt, Hamdan, Abou-Daouk, and the other Scheikhs, with the exception of Samet-Aly, have left us to feast in a neighbouring encampment of the Beni-Hammids. When we resume our march, we feel rather angry at this desertion, not being acquainted with the dispositions of the country we are in. The scene of last night is still fresh in our memories, and we expect every moment to find ourselves opposed by the Beni-Oqbâ, so rudely treated and expelled from our encampment. From this it will appear that we are not incorrectly informed as to the Rhaouarnas, to whom we were in fact indebted for the honour of the nocturnal attack.

But we cannot stop where we are ; we therefore slowly ascend the side of a steep hill, following still the windings of the old road, which is here in such good preservation

that it may be used for travelling without any inconvenience. At forty-seven minutes past one we reach a ruined tower and a level eminence, commanded to our right by a lofty mountain. Our direction is again eastward. After having crossed this platform, we commence another ascent at fifty-five minutes past one. We now turn our backs upon the direction we have hitherto been following, and at two precisely reach a second eminence, on which we still find the traces of the ancient road we have been following all day.

We now march due south through heaps of rubbish, strewing the ground before us, as also the side of the hill on our left. Fifteen yards to our right is a large hillock covered with ruins, called the Kharbet-el-Hafayeh. Evidently, a town has once existed here. Passing the source of a ravine which widens and sinks rapidly towards the west, we proceed along a fine green level covered with ruins. At first, an Arab burying-ground marked by heaps of stones; then, along the base of the perpendicular mountain on our left, many buttresses built of large unhewn stones; to our right, the open area is not more than one hundred and fifty yards wide, and eighty long; to our left, the ruins appear everywhere.

Finally, by twenty-six minutes past two, we halt at the base of a chalky hillock, against which our tents are pitched. A strong sharp wind is blowing, and the contrast between the temperature of yesterday and to-day is anything but pleasant. Fortunately, the hillock, at the foot of which we have established ourselves, affords some shelter against the piercing blasts by which we are chilled.

Once fixed in our new halting-place, we begin our usual

hunt for plants and insects. We are, however, still uneasy at the absence of our Scheikhs and escort, an absence we are at a loss to explain. Our inquietude increases painfully, when we observe several Bedouins, with faces perfectly unknown to us, approach and station themselves without ceremony at our tent door.

Whence come these polite visitants? And is the ground we are encamped upon likely to favour us with more of the same quality? Here are two very natural questions, to which we would gladly obtain satisfactory answers. The first question is answered almost immediately. Loysel—who has clambered, gun in hand, to the top of the chalky mound forming the back of our encampment, with the hope of finding the imaginary game he is so constantly dreaming of—encounters unexpectedly more game than he expected. He has discovered, a few hundred yards southward of us, in a hollow of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid, a considerable nest of small black tents, occupied by the population of which we have already seen some samples. How are we to deal with them? Were we to anathematise our false Scheikhs who have deserted us, we should gain no end. Besides, Scheikh Samet-Aly looks so confident, that evidently he has not the slightest fear of a collision with our neighbours. Such being the case, we follow his example, appear equally unconcerned, and acknowledge cheerfully the visit with which these gentlemen have been pleased to favour us.

Better still! We begin trading with them, and purchase sheep for our dinner, which at once establishes the most cordial understanding. We now resume our business as naturalists and antiquaries, and discover, in

all directions round our tent, remains of levelled walls constructed from blocks of lava.

As night approaches, the stranger Bedouins, observing me and my companions arranging our plants and insects, put many questions to us with eager curiosity, touching these strange operations. I answer them rather audaciously that I am a hakîm (a physician) in quest of new remedies. and that I am studying all the marvels of the creations of Allah. I thus astound their ears with the exact title of an Arabian manuscript which I had formerly in my possession (Adjaïb-Makhloukat-Allah), and produce the expected effect. We are now looked upon as learned sages, and we may make our minds quite easy ; but let us beware of cabinet councils which are sure to follow.

The ruins amongst which we are encamped had been previously pointed out to me under the name of Kharbet-el-Hafayeh ; but I must observe that our new acquaintances call them indifferently by this appellation or by that of Kharbet-Adjerrah, or el-Djerrah, which we have also found assigned to the other ruins encountered by us throughout the day. Beyond all doubt we are on the flank of the Djebel-Adjerrah ; as all the Bedouins are agreed on that point. Is it possible to ascertain what ancient locality is concealed under this name of Adjerrah? I know not that I have succeeded ; but yet I venture to state the hypothesis suggested to me by a peculiar resemblance as to names.

We read in Josephus,* that amongst the twelve towns taken from the Arabs by Alexander Jannæus, father of Hyrcanus, were Agalla, Medeba, and Horonaim. Now Medeba and Horonaim† were positively towns of the

* Ant. Jud. xiv. 1—4. † Isaiah, xv. 2—5 ; Jeremiah, xlviii. 2, 3, 5.

Moabites, according to the testimony of Isaiah and Jeremiah ; Agalla would then, or rather must then, have been also a Moabitic station. But between Agalla and Adjerrah the difference is so small, that I think it very allowable to identify the ruins of the Agalla of Josephus with the Adjerrah of the Arabs of the present day. Let us observe besides that the prophet Isaiah, when speaking of the ruin of Moab,* says : "For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab ; the howling thereof unto Eglaim," &c. We must therefore consider that Eglaim was towards the frontiers of Moab. Reland has already expressed the opinion that this Eglaim (Adjelim) must have been the Agalla of Josephus, and I have no hesitation in adopting his conclusion. It is true that Eusebius places Agallim (Αγαλλείμ), which is evidently the same place, to the southward, and at a distance of eight Roman miles, from Areopolis (Rabbath-Moab) ; and this double indication applies to the ruins of Adjerrah only as regards the distance ; for the ruins of Adjerrah, whether you take them at the bottom or at the top of the Ouad-Adjerrah are nearly due west of Areopolis. But I nevertheless persist in looking for the Eglaim of Scripture and the Αγαλλα of Josephus, in the Adjerrah of the Arabs, because the Αγαλλείμ of Eusebius, placed by him southward of Areopolis, could not have been on the frontier of the Moabitic country, as it ought to be according to the text of Isaiah.

Night has almost closed in, when Samet-Aly announces the approach of Hamdan, whom he descries through the darkness from a prodigious distance. The two senses of hearing and seeing are sharpened amongst Bedouins, in a

* Isaiah, xv. 8.

manner passing the belief of Europeans, who generally require glasses to distinguish objects even within a few paces.

Hamdan is accompanied, on his return, by all our little army, whose desertion had caused us so much uneasiness. The explanation of the riddle is speedily given by the Scheikh of the Thâameras. The Beni-Hammids, on whose territory we are now arrived, a few years since were saved from total ruin by the generosity of Hamdan and his tribe. They are, in consequence, devoted to him body and soul; and we are as safe with them as if we were in the territory of our own faithful Scheikh. The benefactors had gone to feast with those they had delivered, in the encampments of the Beni-Hammids; and thus the allurement of an accidental dinner had caused the temporary desertion of our entire escort. The Arabs of the neighbouring village bestow on Hamdan a thousand caresses; they also are Beni-Hammids, and we may rest satisfied that at present we are quite free from danger or alarm.

The wind rises and becomes still sharper. We hasten to finish our day's work, and seek shelter under our Turkish blankets, from the bitter cold that chills us to the very bones. Everything is still and quiet around us, and we enjoy our sleep in perfect peace.

CHAPTER IX.

Ruins of Kharbet-Sarfah — Ancient Moabitic highway — Singular temple — Ruins of an ancient town — Walls of lava — Mound of the slave, and Moabitic bas-relief—Local legends—Ruins of Schihan or Sihon—Rencontre with wandering Bedouins—The robbers baulked—Eclipse of the moon—A cold night—The march resumed—Avenue of stones—Ruins of a large city—Description of a temple — Remarkable ruins at Beit-el-Kerm—A preceding visitant—Continued ruins—Halt at El-Rabba—Fragment of Moabitic sculpture —Long avenues of stones—The Scheikh Selameh and his escort—Approach to Karak—Passage of a dangerous ravine—Karak, the capital of Moab.

January 17th.

By a few minutes past eight we are on horseback, our tents packed up, our mules loaded, and we are impatient to resume our march. Though the sun is clear and dazzling, a chilling wind blows with great violence, and, as it increases every moment, we feel benumbed whilst sitting inactive on our chargers. At last, by a quarter-past eight, we leave the spot where we have passed the night.

This morning, before starting, I took another ramble towards the summit of the chalky hillock against which our camp was pitched; and, lying against the northern flank of this eminence, I recognised the foundations of a small square structure, built with blocks of lava. Close to it lies the broken fragment of a column, also of lava, but of small dimensions.

To-day we expect to cross the last range of hills still dividing us from the high level of the land of Moab, and

hope to encamp at Schihan. At starting we march due south ; to our left, not more than ten yards distant, commences the steep we have to climb ; one hundred and fifty yards to our right, begin the declivities of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid, on which we discover, quite close to us, the encampment of Bedouins, some of whose inhabitants paid us yesterday the honour of a visit.

The mountain we have to climb is the Djebel-en-Nouêhin. At two hundred yards from our starting point we are on its flank, shaping our course due east. This is literally an escalade ; the road, if such it can be called, is scarcely fit for goats, and strewed at every step with blocks of lava, roughly squared, remains of ancient structures erected on the upper platform. Just as we reach this eminence by half-past eight, we pass over a ruined wall, built of blocks similar to those we find in such abundance on the ascent. They have evidently fallen off from the wall and rolled down on the path. Beyond the wall our course at first lies north-north-east ; the declivity of the valley we have just passed is then to our left, and the crest of this encampment is crowned by the foundations of three towers, built also with blocks of lava. Before us appears a mass of scattered ruins, covering the remainder of the ascent. The Bedouins call them Kharbet-Sarfah ; but, as I have said already, the mountain is named Djebel-en-Nouêhin.

By forty-two minutes past eight, after some windings amongst the ruins, we reach the high level of the land of Moab. We are marching due east, in a line parallel to the direction of Ouad-ebni-Hammid, which is scarcely one hundred and fifty yards distant to our right. The upper ledge of this ouad is literally covered throughout with

ruined walls, undoubtedly the remains of a very considerable town. The sombre hue of these constructions is most striking, the only materials being dark blocks of lava, roughly squared, and bearing a marked resemblance to cyclopean edifices.

From time to time our road passes over fallen walls; but what appears to us most astonishing is a long alley, formed of two lines of blocks of lava, planted in the earth, at a distance of about a yard from each other, reminding us of the Celtic avenues of Carnac. Here the width of the avenue does not exceed four yards. Consequently this alley marks the track of an ancient road; and, accordingly, our present path follows the same direction. Where their fathers travelled, the Bedouins travel also, and will continue so to do for ever. We are certainly moving on a road constructed by the ancient Moabites.

By forty-seven minutes past eight we have entered on the avenue; by fifty-one minutes past eight, a long wall intercepts perpendicularly the left-hand line. A hundred yards further on, a very large enclosure, narrowing at one of its extremities, rests against the same side of the road; then follows a long wall ending in a mass of ruins, indicating the former existence of a structure of some kind. At the point where we have arrived by fifty-five minutes past eight, we observe to our left the opening of a large deep valley, called the Ouad-es-Cheqiq (the Arabs here pronounce this name Es-Cheguig). The crest of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid is protected by a wall approaching to within twenty yards of the path we are following.

Henceforward I give up particularising all the ruined

walls we constantly encounter in our journey; the repetition would be endless. For the future I shall merely name collected heaps, describing more minutely those which appear the most remarkable.

By nine o'clock we notice, about forty yards to our left, a considerable ruin. Fifteen yards to our right passes the wall crowning the ledge of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid, and we now enter upon cultivated grounds. On our right is a well called Bir-Sarfah, and a little further on to the left a square cistern, excavated in the rock. Lastly, a hundred paces further on, we halt before a curious building, the structure of which we are anxious to examine. This building is surrounded by walls about four feet and a half thick. It is easy to discover that, at a comparatively recent period, additions have been made to a much older edifice, strongly contrasting in character with the original portions.

This building is open to the north, through a square door, the uprights, lintel, and sill of which are made of blocks of lava. You enter into what was formerly a hall, fifteen yards long, by twelve in width. This hall is filled with ruined fragments. To the left, and seven yards from the outward face, is a partition wall, forming the entrance to a nave eighteen yards long, and presenting, at regular intervals of three yards, pointed arches, having only their mouldings left. The right-hand wall of this nave rests upon an elbow of the original enclosure, which, at the same time it prolongs, jutting out ten yards in front of the southern face. And lastly, to the left of the principal entrance, a small building, of four square yards in extent, encumbered with stones, rests upon the front

wall. The entrance to this, adjacent to that of the principal edifice, is also through a pointed arch.

Only a few paces in front of this singular construction are three or four Arab tombs, of a very peculiar style. Instead of the usual simple heap of stones covering the grave, we observe here oblong mounds, which seem to have been lately thrown up, and upon which are laid implements of husbandry, probably belonging to the departed. On each side of these funereal mounds, stakes are fixed, connected one with the other by a string. To the strings were attached numerous tufts of human hair, both male and female. These symbols of regret deposited upon the tombs, excited within me a deep emotion; are they Mahommedans who have thus commemorated their departed friends? I doubt it very much. There are Christian Arabs in this country, and perhaps to them we must attribute this touching custom of offering to the dead the tokens of remembrance which European civilisation confines to the living.

What has this building been, which I have just described? Most probably a sacred enclosure. Upon the site of some Moabitic temple, a Roman place of worship may have risen from the same foundations; subsequently, a Christian church, the nave ornamented with five Gothic arches; and later still, a small Mussulman oualy, resting against the exterior wall. These speculations may be erroneous, but they are feasible and connected. I examined this strange ruin carefully, and sketched an accurate plan.

By nineteen minutes past nine we leave this place and resume our march, proceeding south-east. We pass a wall built as usual with blocks of lava, stretching

perpendicularly across our road, and edging on our right the brink of the ouad. Above five hundred yards from the ruin I have just described, a circular elevation, of no great height, presents itself before us. It seems artificial, and entirely covered with the remains of half-buried houses. A town has formerly stood here. These ruins are called, by the Arabs, Kharbet-Sarfah.

By thirty-two minutes past nine we leave the mound of Sarfah. At the spot where we clear the ruins, a wall, still in tolerable preservation, and built with blocks of lava, turns inwards to our left, most likely to connect the other wall we have lately passed, forming the crown work of the upper level of the Ouad-ebni-Hammid. Here stood, in all probability, the gate of the ancient city, for the track we are following passes between two uninterrupted lines of lava blocks, forming one of those strange avenues which bounded most unquestionably the high roads leading through the plains of Moab. This avenue, from the starting point at Kharbet-Sarfah, is in a north-easterly direction, and we follow it until forty-one minutes past nine, a distance of one thousand yards, and all along through cultivated fields.

By thirty-five minutes past nine we have passed, to our left, and about four hundred yards distant from the avenue of stones along which we are marching, a rising ground, some five or six yards high above the level of the plain, and covered with ruins. The Arabs call this Redjom-el-Mahfour (the hollowed mound). I was unable to examine it, as the strange features of our road absorb my whole attention.

At forty-one minutes past nine the ground rises insensibly, and we leave the avenue of stones to enter again

amongst the ruins. These consist now of foundations of walls of great length, crossing each other in every direction, but some forming the exact continuation of the avenue of stones. They are called Kharbet-Emrâah, are nearly one thousand yards in extent, and ten o'clock has arrived before we clear them. Our route, since we have left Sarfah, has been constantly in a north-easterly direction. The Ouad-ebni-Hammid is two miles and a quarter to our right.

The ruins now commence again, and are marked by the peculiar name of Redjom-el-Hammah, (the mound of the baths, or of the warm spring?) On our right, more ruins of immense extent, and to our left, about one hundred and fifty yards distant, another mass called Redjom-en-Nousah (I am not quite sure of this last name). Other remains of avenues of stones appear again, and our course is now towards a ravine, sheltered by a plateau two hundred yards in length, crowned by stupendous ruins, bearing once more the name of Kharbet-Emrâah. We notice here portions of walls built of fine hewn stone, and other buildings (most likely Roman), lining the platform of Emrâah above the ravine.

The direction of the ravine is, generally speaking, from south to north. The depth seldom exceeds ten yards at the utmost, but that suffices to screen us from the wind, which has not ceased blowing with great fury since yesterday, and adds materially to our fatigue. We breakfast on this spot; and by exactly eleven o'clock, after a halt of three-quarters of an hour, resume our march. We now pass continued ruins of immense extent, covering the eminence that forms the right bank of the ouad in which we have breakfasted, and leave them by nine

minutes past eleven. We have resumed our north-east course, and just as we clear the ruins of Emrâah, we find ourselves again in an avenue of stones, leading through an open cultivated country. This line of road flanks at no great distance a large and deep valley, on the side of which the ruins commence again. From this point the traces of walls, built with irregular blocks of lava, are innumerable, and the road by which we are marching is generally bounded by these blocks planted in the ground, forming two parallel lines, intercepted on the right by the ruined walls I have just mentioned. On the left the traces of walls appear more rarely, owing to the contracted width of the passage. The avenue we are following is now divided from the ouad by only a few yards. The ouad itself seems to be about one hundred and fifty yards wide ; its direction is north-easterly, and it is called the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq (the cleft valley).

By half-past eleven we march due north ; and five minutes later reach a well, sunk in the middle of long files of walls, placed on both sides of our road : because the upper level of the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq being then about fifty yards distant from this road, the intervening ground on our left has afforded space enough for these constructions. From this spot we turn due west, and arrive, by forty minutes past eleven, at the foot of a circular mound, formed of squared blocks of lava, partly covered over with earth, which seem to constitute the base of a small round tower. This ruin is called the Redjom-el-Aabed (the mound of the slave). When I reach it, I find our Bedouins sitting near a large block of lava, which they point out to me, saying, "Look, there is a stone like those thou art in quest of!"

I look, and find myself in front of a magnificent *Stèlon*, in black compact lava, representing a bas-relief, of an

FIGURE OF A MOABITE.

antiquity the date of which I shall not presume to determine, even approximately. It consists of a figure as large as life, with the whole of the lower part wanting from the knees, but which, notwithstanding this mutilation, exhibits a monument of art of immense value. To a certainty, we have before us a Moabitic sculpture. A personage, wearing a helmet of Assyrian shape, holds with both hands a javelin with a large iron head, with which he seems to strike a man supposed to be in supplication at his knees. The upper part of the body is naked·

but from the hips down to the knees he is clothed in a short close tunic, exactly similar to that worn by the Egyptians. Over the right shoulder of this personage, and behind his back, is hung a bended bow, without any apparent string. Behind the warrior is the figure of a lion, of small dimensions, which appears to be merely the ornamented leg of a throne, judging by its diminutive size. The relievo of this figure is well defined, the expression of the face strongly marked, and characterised with a savage energy.

A glance suffices to convince me that this is a hybrid monument, in which the Egyptian and the Assyrian styles are intermingled. My joy at the discovery of this treasure may readily be conceived. This joy I am silly enough to give way to, under the eyes of the surrounding Bedouins ; I express my wish to acquire possession of this piece of sculpture, for the removal of which I still more unguardedly offer twelve hundred piastres. I perceive too late that, notwithstanding my intentional reserve, which I had so deliberately resolved to maintain, I have completely defeated myself, and shall most certainly be compelled to leave behind me this invaluable monument of antiquity.

No sooner have I named the twelve hundred piastres, than the old tales of treasure-diggings begin to be whispered around me. The Beni-Hammids, who inhabit this country, are the first to bring forward stories as worthy of belief as the following :—Every year on the very same day of the year, some one of the tribe finds a gold piece (a dynar) at the Redjom-el-Aabed, and precisely under the stone that I had been admiring like a child, when I ought to have openly undervalued it. It follows, then,

that the interior of this block is crammed with gold, and that if I have a longing desire to carry it off, it is because I know its real value, and the rich treasure it contains. I now, therefore, affect indifference, but too late: I have destroyed my hopes, and nipped my own project in the bud.

A hundred paces further on, I order our tents to be pitched in the midst of stupendous ruins, beside a large cave, supported by a pillar, which will serve as a stable for our baggage animals, and as an apartment for our moukris.

The vast remains, amongst which we are encamped for the day, are named by the Arabs of this district, Kharbet-Fouqaûa (the red ruins). Without any possible doubt, we are here on the site of a Moabitic town of the highest antiquity. The ground is strewed with fragments of coarse-coloured pottery, exactly resembling the primitive samples of earthenware found at Santorin in places buried under volcanic beds, of an unknown period. I pick up at every step large cubes of original mosaic, white, black, and red. We shall shortly inquire what town this may have been, on whose ruins we are treading at this moment.

Schihan lies directly eastward in front of us; a ruin crowning an isolated hillock, and commanding all the extensive plain of Moab. Important discoveries may, perhaps, await us in such a place; we have still several hours daylight, which we can employ in this excursion. Such being the case, we determine to proceed at once to Schihan. We leave to our people the care of pitching our tents, arranging our luggage in order, and preparing our kitchen apparatus; and we are off again by nineteen

minutes past twelve, without any escort beyond two Arabs of the Beni-Hammids, who follow us on foot.

We soon pass on our right a cistern ; then, after having traversed cultivated fields, entirely cleared from rubbish, we come to other ruins covering both sides of a narrow valley, which we cross at its neck, where it is closed by four or five huge cyclopean walls, placed alternately so as to support the earth, whilst leaving a passage for the rain-waters to run down the bottom of the ravine. This ouad, which is merely a continuation of the one commanded right and left by the ruins amidst which we had pitched our camp, is called the Ouad-Emdebêa.

Between our encampment and the Ouad-Emdebêa, we have again followed an avenue of stones. Beyond the ouad, we cross another small cultivated plain, commanded by a very low mound, on the top of which is a cistern surrounded by walls built with blocks of lava. To our right, the plain presents traces of ancient walls, extending out of sight. We then proceed north-east, and by thirty-five minutes past twelve we have cleared the ruins.

By forty-six minutes past twelve we fall in again with other long piles of walls, which we climb over. At forty-eight minutes past twelve the plain begins to incline upwards. Three minutes later, the ground on our left shows many ruins, whilst to our right they are thinly scattered. At forty-five minutes past twelve we turn eastward, and arrive at the base of a circular construction, probably a tower, beyond which appear once more walls in considerable extent. Emerging again from these, by fifty-seven minutes past twelve we ascend the gentle acclivity of the eminence of Schihan. By two minutes past one we reach a cistern hollowed in the rock and surrounded

by a wall. And, lastly, by six minutes past one we alight at the entrance of the singular ruins of Schihan.

During our progress a lapwing has been shot by Rothschild. We hand over the game to our Beni-Hammids, who immediately pluck and roast it as well as they can, by lighting a fire with some dry brambles. We entrust them with the charge of our horses, and begin at once to explore the ruins. What stood here formerly? —a palace, a temple, or a fortress?—I shall not presume to decide; but merely to furnish a description of what still remains of this ancient structure. A square building fifty yards in length on every side, with an entrance on the western face. In this face there is a large breach, and in front of the breach a circular mound, concealing, perhaps, the base of a tower ten yards in diameter; an avenue of stones terminates at this mound, which is removed twenty-eight yards from the south-western angle of the enclosure, and eighteen from the north-western angle. On the left front, that looks towards the north, a square tower projects, measuring ten yards on each side, the inner angles of which are twenty yards distant from the north-eastern and north-western angles of the enclosure. The eastern and southern faces are both rectilinear.

It is very difficult to judge at present of the interior arrangement, on account of the accumulated rubbish and brambles which, during many centuries, have concealed the walls under piles of vegetable matter. The site of a large central hall may still be recognised, in the centre of which a well opens into a deep cave or cistern. Against the eastern face of this hall rest the partition-walls of two square rooms; and, lastly, in a parallel line with the

entrance face may be traced the walls of another hall, forming a parallelogram, situated to the right. Thirty yards in front of the northern face is a wall running parallel thereto, but of which only the foundations are visible. Another similar wall may be traced sixty yards in front of the eastern face. Vestiges of other walls parallel to the building are conspicuous, also, towards the north-western and south-eastern angles; but it is most important to observe, that on the northern and southern faces additional walls intercepted at right angles the walls of the outer enclosure, as well as those forming a continuation of the side supports of the main building, so as to constitute a series of enclosures within the outer walls.

In other respects, there is not the slightest analogy as to construction between the walls of the central edifice and those of the enclosure. To form the sides of the building, the primitive rock has been cut and faced with blocks of lava; whilst the outer walls, now reduced to their foundations, are built of rude masses of unshaped stone, exactly resembling the long walls we have passed and crossed so often, during several hours.

I find here one of those uncouth cubes of mosaic, to which I venture to ascribe a very remote antiquity; and its presence satisfies me that there have existed in Schihan monuments anterior to the Greek and Roman civilisation, and that the ruins we have just examined are vestiges of these early constructions.

Some architectural remains, unfortunately few in number, lie scattered amongst the rubbish, and I hasten to sketch their outline. They consist chiefly of a fragment, in lava, which formed, in all probability, the base of the lateral pilaster of a gate; the mouldings of this base

resemble closely those used in the classical orders. The same observation applies to another fragment of a cornice in gray limestone.

The most interesting of the whole is the capital of a pillar, also of gray limestone, a little more than a foot in height, and twenty-eight inches across the upper diameter; whilst the shaft of the column has only a diameter of seventeen inches and a half. It may certainly be taken for an Ionic capital, but of an eccentric model; for instance, the volutes, of small proportions, are separated by two large ovolos, and between the volutes and the adjacent ovolos, palm-leaves are figured on the shaft. Certainly, a capital like this has but a very remote analogy with the Ionic capital, and those who carved it must have been rude barbarians, belonging to a period preceding rather than following the age of the Grecian artists to whom we are indebted for the fine proportions of the true Ionic style.

From the platform of the ruins of Schihan we command the entire plain of Moab. Southward, this plain extends beyond our view; eastwards, it seems bounded by a range of blue mountains, but they are too far off for us to ascertain the exact distance. Northward, half a league from us, opens the Ouad-el-Moudjeb, cutting abruptly across the plain, and looking like an immense rent or fissure in the ground. This ouad appears to wind directly from the westward, until nearly opposite Schihan; but after that, it bends visibly towards the south-east.

Whilst we were busily occupied examining the ancient structures of Schihan, some in search of insects, others of antique fragments, I hear an animated conversation going on outside. I climb the outer wall, and discover five

Arabs on foot, armed with guns, yataghans, and khandjars, discoursing from a distance with our two guides, who are busily engaged in devouring their half-roasted lapwing.

From whence have these new comers issued? We had trusted to the very nature of the site of Schihan to dismiss every apprehension of surprise. From the top of such an eminence we commanded the plain as far as the eye could reach, in all directions, and here we have suddenly five Bedouins upon our hands—five Bedouins, too, with anything but honest intentions, as I gather from their conversation with our guides.

"What do you want?"

"To plunder the travellers you have conducted here."

"They are under our protection, and you shall attempt nothing of the kind."

"What nonsense! Join us, and we will go shares."

"Stand off!" and a gun was pointed against the brigands.

I then saw one of them advance, notwithstanding this warning; and our second guide, who had no other weapon than a dabbous, or club of hard wood, struck him such a vigorous blow upon the shoulder, that the rascal grinned horribly, and stopped to rub his disabled arm.

I had already seized the fowling-piece, which I carried as usual slung across my shoulder; and, having cocked both barrels, stood prepared to send a couple of bullets against two of the rascals who were advancing to assail us.

On the blow being struck with the club, they paused a moment. I shouted to my companions, "Stand to your arms, and look to your horses! we are attacked!" In a twinkling we are all together, and a line of five good

double-barrelled guns are suddenly exhibited to the hostile strangers, who had imagined that they had merely to deal with imprudent ramblers. The sight of our arms produced its unfailing effect, and the five brigands became at once submisssive and polite.

We mounted our horses again, and, once in the saddle, I ordered the intruders to the front, warning them to take care of themselves, if they did not wish to digest a meal of powder and lead. Such is the usual formula in this country, exchanged between parties who understand each other. We had no occasion to repeat the hint, and our brigands, looking as silly as foxes entrapped by a hen, preceded us obsequiously in the direction of our encampment.

They now tried to put as honest a face as they could on the matter, and assumed the air of sportsmen on a hunting party. To dispel from their minds any sudden temptation with which they might be seized to turn on us unexpectedly with a volley of musketry, we march in open file and close behind them, ready to give our fire at the slightest symptom of hostility. All therefore goes as smoothly and as graciously as possible.

On our way we put up some partridges, and our new friends invite us to have a shot at them. I forbid my companions to comply, who readily understand, without further explanation, that this is no time to waste powder on inoffensive birds. I return the politeness of our Bedouins, by begging them to fire themselves at the game they have recommended to our notice. One of them then crawled on all-fours, creeping like a snake for more than a hundred paces, concealing himself, by some inexplicable process, behind stones scarcely bigger than a man's fist. In this

manner he continued to approach within reach of the covey ; then, throwing himself flat on the ground, behind a block of stone, he took a long aim before he fired from an interminable carbine, and fairly cut in two the unlucky bird he had covered.

Decidedly these gentlemen are good marksmen, but they require a slow aim. His shot having taken effect, the sportsman picked up his divided bird, and handed it to me in triumph. I declined the offer, but gave him two piastres as a bakhshish, and in token of our admiration for the splendid shot with which he had astonished us.

These adventurers had discovered that there was nothing to be done with us, and that they had imprudently embarked in a failing enterprise. They were now anxious to take their leave before we reached our tents, where some of our friendly Scheikhs might recognise and punish them severely. As we neared, on our return, the Ouad-Emdebêa, they vanished as suddenly as they had made their appearance, and we found ourselves amongst our own people, with no other escort than the two Beni-Hammids who had accompanied us at starting. This little adventure acted as a lesson, and taught us, by experience, that prudence was not superfluous whilst among the savages into whose dens we were boldly venturing.

The remainder of the day was passed in making our way back to the Redjom-el-Aabed, and in securing ourselves against the piercing wind that whistled round us. Belly has drawn with wonderful exactness a copy of the Moabitic bas-relief. I strain my wits to hit upon some plan of carrying off this prize ; but it appears quite hope-

less and impossible to transport a block of compact lava, four feet long, two feet wide, and a foot and a half thick. It weighs considerably more than two thousand pounds, and no beast of burthen in the world could carry such a load through the journey we have before us. Then how are we to manage? Must we resign the treasure? I have some idea of despatching a Bedouin to Karak, to bring back a stonecutter, who shall reduce the *Stèlon* on the side at the back of the figure, decreasing its weight in the same proportion. An envoy volunteers immediately; but he requires eight hours to go and eight more to return; and is he likely to find a stonecutter willing to place me in a position to carry off this bas-relief, in opposition to the wishes of a whole tribe, who expect to extract therefrom an annual tribute of a dynar each? The attempt may bring the tribe unanimously upon our shoulders. All points being duly balanced, I give up the attempt, dismiss the messenger, and console myself with the sketch in my portfolio, and the hope of taking an exact impression to-morrow.

Our evening passes as usual, and we get through the ordinary work as fast as possible, to escape from the north wind which lashes us through the canvass walls of our tent, and screen ourselves from its rough salutation under our blankets.

Before retiring, we have had the pleasure of contemplating a fine eclipse of the moon, which took us completely unawares; but, as we are not astronomers, we are content to bestow a moment's rapid admiration on this grand phenomenon of nature, and creep to our couches as fast as possible.

January 18th.

The cold has been so intense during the night that all our bivouac fires have been deserted. Our faithful Ahouad is the only one who has remained at his post; and this morning he presents himself in our tent quite benumbed, but good-humoured still, to inquire if we have suffered from the chill. A noble creature, proud in conscious fidelity, and the absolute trust we repose in him.

By degrees our Arabs emerge from the ruined caves, the cisterns and holes of every kind in which they have sought shelter from the piercing wind, and our little army is mustered in full force; but, unaccustomed to this chilling temperature, they shiver and look very miserable.

At break of day I take bearings with the compass, which enable me to mark correctly the positions of the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq, of the Ouad-Emdebêa, and of Schihan. Near the bottom of the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq, and on the declivity opposite to that upon which we have passed the night, we descry some black spots; these are the tents of an encampment of the Beni-Hammid, who have established themselves by a spring; the same whence our table was supplied for last night's meal. Our horses have been watered from an ancient cistern, amongst the ruins beyond the Ouad-Emdebêa.

The Bedouin encampment I have just mentioned, affords us many visitors. I question them anxiously concerning the ruins which surround us, and try to ascertain if there are other sculptured stones, besides the one at the Redjom-el-Aabed. One of them then

mentions to me a grotto excavated in the rock, lying only a few hundred yards from our camp, towards the eastern extremity of the Kharbet-Fouqoûa. This grotto is called Morharrat-ed-Darouich (the grotto of the dervise). I hasten thither, under the conduct of a guide, hoping to be repaid for the trouble I am taking; but I find only a round cistern, eleven yards in diameter, hewn from the rock, and the entrance difficult of access. At the bottom of this cistern lie two fragments of columns, in lava, one of them nine, the other fifteen inches in diameter. At the extremities of these fragments are holes bored through the axis, and which must have served as grooves for spindles. No doubt they are stone rollers, such as the Arabs use to press and level the terraces on their roofs, as soon as it begins to rain, to prevent the water from penetrating into their houses. The use of these rollers in Asia may be traced back to the earliest periods; for M. Botta has found some in the ruins of the Ninevite palaces of Khorsabad.

The Morharrat-ed-Darouich offers, however, some interesting subjects for observation; the walls, with the exception of the ceilings, have been entirely coated with a thick layer of stucco, and this stucco was impressed with devices in a uniform pattern, as high as the natural rock composing the roof. A treble line of arrows, disposed obliquely, like the back-bone of a fish, encircles the whole extent about two yards above the ground. Over these three lines, the entire surface is ornamented with small crooked arrows, their points turned upwards; whilst below the lines the same are repeated, with their points reversed; and lastly, the interior coating of the cement is mixed up with abundant fragments of flat

pottery, or rather cakes of burnt clay, disposed, no doubt, for the purpose of giving greater consistency to the stucco ; whilst the outer coating has been kneaded with small fragments of flint.

Having finished my notes, I hasten to return to camp, my mind still intent upon the bas-relief, an impression of which I immediately commenced. For nearly an hour, in the hope of achieving it, I struggled against a most unfriendly easterly wind, which constantly blew off the wet sheets of paper I was moulding against the figure, whenever my hand was taken away. I had to begin over and over again, though I tried to form a screen with our kitchen table, but all in vain. I spoiled a vast quantity of the paper intended for my herbal, in trying to form a mould of sufficient consistency to cover and retain all the relievos ; but whenever I imagined I was making some progress, the wind defeated my exertions, and compelled me to renounce an undertaking for which my skill and materials were equally inadequate. I say nothing of the ill-humour and vexation produced by this unlucky failure.

When I had fairly renounced my attempt in despair, I gave orders to strike our tents and commence our march as soon as possible. I had lost quite enough time to no purpose, and was obliged to console myself with an excellent drawing in place of the model.

By seven minutes past nine our little force was in motion, and we left Kharbet-Fouqoûa, proceeding at first eastward, and passing again within twenty yards of the Redjom-el-Aabed, towards which I threw a last look of covetous regret. When we had reached the cistern, close by the monument, and only one hundred yards distant

from the brink of the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq, we turned off at ten minutes past nine to the south-south-east, leaving to our right a vast number of ruins, whilst those on our left had nearly disappeared. At this spot where the high table-land extends three hundred yards to the east of the ouad, we are marching parallel to an avenue of stones, with one branch shooting off through the ruins, in the direction of the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq. But soon this avenue, which was at first fifteen yards distant on our right, draws closer to our route, and by twenty minutes past nine we find ourselves again between two lines of lava blocks. Here the Ouad-ech-Cheqiq has increased its distance from us to about six hundred yards, and keeps bearing away to the southward, whilst we continue our course south-south-east.

We now enter cultivated grounds, without any other sign of ruins than the avenue of stones, through which we keep marching without any deviation. By twenty-four minutes past nine this avenue disappears, but is immediately succeeded by a paved road made of blocks of lava. To the right and left appear again some ruins of no great extent. By thirty-three minutes past nine we observe to our left, about one hundred yards off, a double circular enclosure, built with blocks of lava, one hundred yards in diameter, and with a mass of rubbish in the centre. This enclosure is situated on the bank of a muddy stream we are obliged to cross, and which reduces the ground to a perfect swamp.

No sooner have we crossed this stream, than the avenue of stones shows itself again, ten yards off to the left of our route; and, crossing it by thirty-seven

minutes past nine, inclines off again to disappear in a short time to the southward. To our left, ruins thinly scattered are still observable. We are yet in sight of Schihan, this last-named place commanding the whole of the plain through which we are travelling. By forty minutes past nine we reach a mass of fragments, the intersecting point of two walls at right angles with each other, one of these walls pointing directly from north to south. Immediately after, the perpetual avenue of stones again borders our road.

Here we perceive more ruins, consisting of long walls intersecting our avenue, and of some circular piles. The name given to these ruins by the Arabs puzzles me; the first I question tells me they are called Kharbet-Bigdalen, and this strange pronunciation prevents me from understanding the word. As I doubt its being correct, I repeat the question to others, and some pronounce the name Kharbet-Medjeleïn. I then recognise the plural of the word Medjdel; the real name means, therefore, the ruins of the two fortresses.

At forty-five minutes past nine we are still in our avenue of stones, with another similar avenue branching off to the right in a south-westerly direction. And lastly, by fifty minutes past nine, we find ourselves encircled by the vast ruins of a city, to which the avenue we have been so long following, leads, and crowning the northern bank of an ouad, of no great depth at this point where it begins. The opposite bank of the ouad is composed of perpendicular rocks of moderate height; and on this bank we observe, immediately before us, an old square tower, of fine workmanship, probably Roman, and in good preservation.

The ruins by which we are surrounded consist of houses, that look as if they had been suddenly crushed, notwithstanding the solidity of their construction, and three parts of which are buried under-ground. All seem to be provided with large cellars, whilst these apparent cellars are nothing more than the ground-floors of the original dwelling-places. Some fragments of sculpture present strange carvings, of which I hasten to take a sketch. Near the upper ledge of the ravine, the avenue of stones forms a cross-way with several branches, one of which turns eastward, whilst another follows a westerly direction, along the ouad, which forms the commencement of the Ouad-beni-Hammid.

By five minutes past ten, after a quarter of an hour's halt, we resume our march, turning at first eastward, but to resume almost immediately our constant south-easterly direction. Here the road passes directly through a square enclosure, of about a hundred yards on each face, divided into five parallel compartments by walls about twenty yards distant from each other. Beyond this enclosure the ruins disappear. By a quarter-past ten we have left two hundred and fifty yards behind us the square tower just mentioned, and discover, at one hundred and fifty yards in advance, to our right, a vast rectangular mound, of no great height, but covered with extensive ruins; and to our left a flat crowned hillock, forty or fifty yards in diameter, surmounted equally by ruins. By twenty-six minutes past ten we are exactly between the two masses, which bear in common the name of Kharbet-Tedoum.

We alight anxiously, in the hope of making some interesting discovery, and this hope is not falsified.

A structure, built of fine hewn stone, stands on the northern front of the large enclosure; and to this we immediately direct our steps.

The first object that strikes us is a huge block of stone, in which have been excavated the mouth and the trough of a well.

The building which we have come to examine is a square edifice, of rather more than thirty feet on each side; its walls are two feet and a half in thickness, and still above six feet and a half in height. Openings of gates are visible on three of its faces—the northern, the eastern, and the southern; but one, the northern, is at present blocked up. Judging from its dimensions, this was originally the principal entrance. This gate is more than seven feet wide, and has been very neatly walled in with large blocks of stone. It is partly buried, and the entablature is formed of a single block, thirty inches long and fifty high. This entablature exhibits an unusual system of mouldings, all originating in straight lines. On one of the intermediate square compartments, or plat-bands, has been traced, in large Cufic or Arabic characters, coeval with the first period of the Mussulman conquests, the formula *Bism-Illah* (in the name of God). Perhaps this was inscribed there when, the edifice having been changed into a Mahommedan temple, the original entrance was walled in.

The gate opening into the eastern face is little more than three feet wide; it is set, as in a frame, between the bases of two rectangular pillars. The outward face of these pillars is sixteen inches broad, while the face parallel to the axis of the gate scarcely exceeds thirty. The gate in the south-eastern wall is without any ornament, and

not more than twenty-seven inches wide. An avenue of stones, ten yards broad, leads up to this face; and, as the whole structure is built upon a mound, it is still perceptible that the access from the plain was by a flight of fourteen or fifteen steps, nearly a yard in breadth, formed in the ground and edged with masonry.

Inclining against the western wall of this building is another enclosure, extending ten yards on each side, divided by a wall parallel to the northern front, and some distance in the rear: this second enclosure is thrown back a little to the northward of the first.

Fifteen yards in front of the southern face there is a small circular hillock, on the summit of which stands a portion of a stone column, rounded on three sides only, and surmounted by a plain parallelopiped, twenty inches in length, eighteen in breadth, and ten in thickness. A few yards from this mound is another fragment of a column, rather more than twelve inches in diameter.

I have here given an accurate description of this ancient structure, apparently intended for religious purposes. From a Pagan temple it had most likely been converted into a Christian church; and again, at the period of the Mussulman conquest, transformed into a mosque for the followers of Mohammed. Why I think a Christian church existed there, under the Byzantine monarchy, is founded on the presence, at the foot of the northern wall, of a square capital grooved or fluted on all its faces, and twined with knots. At the first glance this capital reminded me forcibly of the capitals of the two fine marble pillars, taken from the church of Saint Saba of Acre, by the Venetians, and placed on the right of St. Mark's, at the entrance of the Doge's palace. This

capital is thirty inches broad, twelve inches high, and sixteen long on the lower surface.

I would have wished to have had more time at my command to devote to the investigation of these interesting remains; but the morning was fast wearing away; we were still far from Karak, where we purposed to halt for the night, and it was already past eleven o'clock. It was, therefore, impossible to tarry longer without exposing ourselves to travel in darkness, a proceeding as little agreeable to the taste of our Arabs as to our own.

By a quarter-past eleven we leave Kharbet-Tedoum, turning eastward in the direction of the mound strewed with ruins, to which I have already alluded. This mound is only two hundred yards distant from the building just described; it is at least forty yards in diameter, and, without doubt, some important structure must have been erected there. What it was I am unable to guess. As soon as we have passed this mound we resume our march, at first in a south-south-eastern direction; but for the last hour we have observed, far off to our left, a square building, which seems of considerable importance. "What is that?" I inquire of our Arabs. "Nothing worth looking at," is the ready answer, "it is only the Beit-el-Kerm" (the house of the vine). This is all the information I can extract from them. In the middle of naked and level plains a structure of such magnitude seems to me rather extraordinary.

I hesitate, nevertheless, apprehensive of the night, which may surprise us on the road. I am much tempted to pass this ruin without notice; I compromise with my conscience, and resist the instances of Rothschild, who

insists on seeing what it is. I tell him we must halt at Er-Rabbah, where in all probability we shall be obliged to encamp, and that from thence we can return to visit Beit-el-Kerm. Rothschild is obstinate, and at last we determine to allow our luggage, already considerably in advance, to proceed on the march, whilst we strike off the road, marching directly towards the ruin in sight, to the utter discomfiture of all our Scheikhs.

Twenty minutes past eleven have arrived when we determine on this détour, and we push our horses to their speed, that we may lose no time. We are now proceeding due east, along an isolated ruin, or rather by a heap of shapeless rubbish. When we have arrived within a few hundred yards of the Beit-el-Kerm, Rothschild darts forward, reaches the ruin, behind which he disappears for a moment, and then, suddenly returning, shouts in admiration—"Come along! come quick! It is as fine as Bâalbek!" This suffices to excite the whole party to a rapid gallop.

By thirty-five minutes past eleven we have all alighted, and participate most heartily in the admiration of our companion. We are standing in front of the remains of a magnificent tetrastylic temple, evidently of the same period as the temples of Bâalbek; that is to say, coeval with the age of Adrian and the Antonines.

The ground is strewed with tambours of the shafts of pillars, with remains of capitals and fragments of cornices. How lamentable that such a beautiful monument should have been overthrown! Has its destruction been produced by an earthquake, or by human violence? I prefer believing in a catastrophe independent of the will of man. Be that as it may, let me describe what is left of thi

marvellous structure, the walls of which are still four or five yards high.

It is a perfect rectangle, set directly to the east. The front and rear faces are nearly one hundred feet in length; the two lateral faces scarcely exceed ninety feet. The walls are six feet thick. At the four angles they project slightly for a few inches, and these projections extend nearly eighteen feet along the lateral faces, and twenty feet along the front and back walls. The interior measurement of the temple is eighty-four feet by sixty-eight.

On the front face were placed four huge columns, four feet in diameter; the lower divisions of these are still in their original position. The two central columns are distant from each other twenty feet, from axis to axis. A distance of fifteen feet, from axis to axis, divides these two columns from the columns at each angle; and all four are distant seven feet from the inner face of the vestibule. This vestibule is twenty feet in depth. The gate of the temple is eleven feet wide. To the right and left are two consoles or brackets, jutting out from the wall, divided from the side-posts of the gate by a distance of nine feet. A projecting panel, four feet and a half broad, stands between each console and the gate, and commences only one foot and a half from the edge of the gate on the outside; the angular projections of the walls are united to each other by much smaller ones, forming altogether a kind of general base, about three feet in height above the present ground.

At the further end of the temple, two walls, each five feet thick, standing perpendicular to the back, and seven yards distant from each other, form a *sacellum* or chapel,

of twenty-one square feet, the front of which bows out in a circle, with a radius of eleven feet. The whole interior of the building is encumbered with blocks of stone, fragments of columns and capitals, heaped in a perfect chaos of ruins, through which it is extremely difficult to effect a passage.

The place is often resorted to as a temporary abode by the Bedouins, as we may judge from the furze, or rather compost accumulated for litter. This, with the dung of animals hardening in the sun, to serve as fuel, indicates the frequent presence of man in this ruined temple. Either the usual inhabitants have gone out for a ramble, or they have concealed themselves in some hole, through fear of being robbed by strangers. One thing is certain, not a living soul is visible.

Amongst the fine fragments of sculpture, strewn around in great abundance, and some of which have been used to form enclosures rather too open for shelter, we find a fine arch-stone, bearing a bust of Apollo, with a radiated head; a magnificent lion's mouth, formerly used as a gutter-spout; numerous Corinthian capitals, more or less defaced by time; and fragments of cornices, embellished with very rich foliage. All these were portions of the temple; but there are others, also, which cannot have belonged to it. Mouldings, and bases of columns, of a much more simple style, are found here and there. These, with blocks of lava, and sculptured fragments of the same material, are evident signs of the pre-existence of buildings on this spot, much more ancient, and most probably of Moabitic origin.

We congratulate ourselves on having gone out of our road to examine this fine ruin, which is certainly little

known to this day, though we are not the first who have paid it a visit. On the wall of the vestibule we read the name of "HYDE," accompanied by the date, 1822; these characters having been carefully engraved with the blade of a knife. Who is this traveller? I have not the most remote idea. Our friend Loysel, who deems his credit injured by finding at Beit-el-Kerm this earlier visiting-card of Mr. Hyde, incribes his own name above the one already there, with the following addition: *Venu ávant!!!* (arrived first). I need scarcely say that this piece of buffoonery occasioned a general laugh.

Beit-el-Kerm is mentioned in Zimmerman's map; but in front of the locality thus designated, he has placed a mountain, which I can positively assert does not exist. The ground on which the ruins stand is a perfect level. Towards the north, the hillock of Schihan is the only eminence visible; and behind us, looking southward, we descry a trifling elevation, serving as a base to the ruins of Er-Rabbah.

It is now fifty minutes past twelve, and we have wasted an hour and a half at Beit-el-Kerm. These gratuitous halts are not at all to the taste of our Scheikhs. Every moment they urge us to make haste, and get on horseback again. At last we most unwillingly consent to do so, and march across the plain, in a direction nearly due south, inclining a few degrees to the eastward. By fifty-eight minutes past twelve we pass close to an inclosure, containing enormous ruins, the name of which I cannot obtain from any of our Arabs, who have never heard it mentioned. We are now evidently on the remains of an ancient road, taking us in a south-south-west direction. By a quarter after one we pass, on our left, at the

distance of five hundred yards, a mound covered with rubbish; and, by twenty minutes past one, other and more extensive ruins appear, seven hundred yards from us, in the same direction. Neither of these appear to be known by any specific name.

By twenty-seven minutes past one we are in front of the ruins of a small square temple, most probably of Roman construction. Three of its columns are still standing; and close by these, a capital is lying on the ground. The area within this temple is paved. At the spot where the road rises gently before us, and about one hundred yards from the ruin I have just mentioned, we re-enter an avenue of stones, leading us through the ruins of Er-Rabbah, which we enter by half-past one, and halt almost immediately.

We had hoped to find our luggage-mules waiting for us at Er-Rabbah. Alas! Alas! they have gone on further, and our cook accompanies them. We cannot encamp here, and must push on to Karak. As our Arabs had forewarned us, there is not a drop of water to be found in Er-Rabbah,—a privation equally insupportable to man or beast. Fortunately, we discover our Macedonian Nicholas, who has had the good sense to wait for us; or rather, Matteo has posted him at Er-Rabbah, on the look-out, with a relay of provisions. We profit by our halt, to take some slight refreshment, of which we were greatly in need. A few hard eggs, and fowls even harder than the eggs, compose, as usual, our banquet.

As soon as we have acquitted ourselves, with the voracity of hungry travellers, we hasten to throw a glance over the surrounding ruins. Every one runs by

himself, and, scrambling over the heaps of rubbish, starts off in quest of monuments. Eighty yards distant from the spot where we have halted, is a fine Roman gate, which has been split asunder by an earthquake. The principal arcade has fallen in, but to the right and left of it are still existing, in perfect preservation, small lateral arches, walled up, and which probably have never been anything more than imitation gates. Above the small one on the right, the large hewn stones of the coping, shaken from their places by the earthquake that destroyed the building, have slipped over each other, so that they seem to be suspended in the air, and ready to topple down at the slightest shock. Before reaching this gate, we observe several shafts of columns still standing in their original places ; but, excepting these fragments, and some fallen capitals lying here and there on the ground, it seems as if this space had always been unencumbered with buildings, and as if it was intended as a kind of public square.

Rich fragments, of uniform style, form an edging along the right-hand side of the road leading us to this spot, and this edging begins from the very foot of the eminence covered with the ruins of Er-Rabbah.

A short distance southward from the Roman gate, and only fifty yards beyond the road, is a square cistern of ordinary dimensions ; but further on, a hundred yards to the right, is a second square cistern, three times larger than the former, and altogether of enormous size. These two cisterns are surrounded by extensive ruins to a considerable distance ; a quarter of the town has evidently existed on this side of the road. On the left-hand side, the ground is a few yards higher,

and the ruins on all sides are more densely heaped together.

Two hundred yards distant to the left, is a square enclosure, the walls of which are still nearly six feet high. This appears to have been formerly the esplanade in front of a temple. The area open to the north is paved with square blocks of black lava, and in the centre is a hole leading into a cave, which we were not tempted to examine. Amongst the heaps of rubbish are often seen sculptured blocks of lava belonging to a period of civilisation anterior to the Roman conquest. One of these is a fragment of the jamb or mantel-tree of a door or window-frame, ornamented with mouldings and flower-work at the corner. As the weight of this relic is not excessive, we prevail on Nicholas to carry it instead of the eggs, the fowls, and the bread, of which we have lightened him, The honest fellow takes up the huge stone without murmuring, and resumes his journey, trotting after our luggage, which he must overtake as he can. This fragment of Moabitic sculpture has been since deposited in the Louvre.

We have now reached twenty-seven minutes past two o'clock, and our Scheikhs are more importunate in their remonstrances than ever. Prudence, besides, warns us that we have no time to lose. Once more we regain our saddles, deploring the necessity which compels us to pass so rapidly through these curious ruins, and when we start we resume our journey directly southward. The ground upon which Er-Rabbah stood, forms an eminence in the shape of a half-moon, embracing, towards the south, a contracted level space, being a kind of promontory between the two divisions of the town. On this en-

closed space, which we cross according to its axis, that is, from north to south, the naked rock is almost everywhere close to the surface.*

Before reaching the bottom of the eminence, we descry to our left, about two hundred yards distant from our road, a second square ruin, which seems rather important; then again, about seven hundred yards off, and still to the left, a thick wall, being the beginning of the left horn of the crescent upon which the town was built. This horn extends a few hundred yards southward, and bears a few more ruins, dispersed at intervals.

All the rising ground, stretching like a curtain to our right, continues to be covered with fragments of buildings. Finally, to the left of our route, as soon as we have reached the bottom of the eminence, or rather the limit of the ancient town, an avenue of stones commences, stretching out far in advance. We fall into this avenue by thirty-eight minutes past two, at a spot where two long level lines of these same walls, built with blocks of lava, divided from each other by a space of one hundred yards, intercept perpendicularly the right-hand side of the avenue. From the extremity of the lower wall, another of the same description, and of equal length, branches off in a northerly direction. Here also terminates the left horn of the crescent of Er-Rabbah.

As soon as we have gained the plain once more, we turn to the south-south-west, and lose, almost immediately, the avenue of stones, instead of which we encounter evident signs of an ancient paved road. By forty-one

* Amongst the ruins of Er-Rabbah are found immense quantities of hewn stones, cut from a very coarse calcareous rock, mixed with shells, which has evidently been taken from the spot.

minutes past two we pass by a hillock, eighty yards off, to our right, crowned with rubbish, with an avenue of stones leading up to it, and branching off evidently from the ancient road we are following. By fifty-one minutes past two the plain inclines downwards, and we pass ten yards to the right of a mound strewed with ruins, to which the Arabs can assign no individual name. There we fall again into the avenue of stones, interrupted right and left by walls, forming level enclosures. At exactly three o'clock the avenue of stones we are following turns south-south-east, and a branch shoots off, that loses itself in the distance in an east-south-east direction. Almost immediately after that, the principal avenue disappears, and we march due south, for some minutes, across a plain totally devoid of ruins. By eight minutes past three the avenue of stones appears again, and preserves a southerly direction ; but at ten minutes past three we turn south-west, directly across the avenue, which is here furnished with a pavement still in tolerable repair.

We are now in sight, twelve hundred yards to our left, of considerable ruins, the name of which I cannot gather from our Arabs. By a quarter-past three we perceive, about a thousand yards in advance, and to the right, on the side of a hill, other ruins equally extensive, and to which our guides are also unable to assign a name. By twenty-two minutes past three our road inclines to the south-south-west, nearing the hill covered with ruins, which we have been gazing on for several minutes.

Just then we discover issuing from the ruins five Bedouins on horseback, armed with lances, and riding towards us at full gallop. Our Scheikhs form themselves immediately into a small advanced squadron ; every man

seizes his gun, and we march in compact order towards the spot where we expect to meet our approaching visitors. Hamdan, Abou-Daouk, and our Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs halt to receive the five cavaliers who are bearing down upon us like an avalanche, although some are mounted on mares almost ready to foal. Salutations are exchanged rather coldly and with an ungracious air on either side, as we come up to join in the interview. The chief of the advancing party is Scheikh Selameh, the nephew of the Scheikh of Karak, who has come forward with several of his friends to meet and give us welcome. For the last three days they have been lying in wait amongst the ruins, from which they have just issued like a troop of jackals.

We feel deeply sensible of the honour these gentlemen are conferring upon us; and I think it would be difficult to select elsewhere a more choice detachment of brigands, both in look and expression. The Scheikh Selameh wears a scarlet robe and a black abaya, both of them worse than threadbare. He has a long face, thin lips, a sharp nose, and altogether a coarse, brutal appearance. His features have been furrowed by the small-pox, which has also encircled his eyes with red. Take him altogether, he is an ugly animal, inspiring us with very little confidence; and his companions are not much better favoured than himself.

I approach Selameh with a *Salam-aleikoum*, which the impudent vagabond doos not condescend to return, though he seems to be muttering something; but the words are smothered between his lips, and scarcely sound like benedictions. Beyond a doubt, we have fallen into bad company; and I confess, the fact of my *salam* not being returned makes me rather uneasy; but we have drawn

the cork, and must now drink the wine without flinching. With a motion of the hand Selameh signs to us to pursue our journey, and we move on rather chop-fallen, behind him, whispering to each other our apprehensions as to the adventures, more or less agreeable, likely to be in store for us at Karak.

Selameh and his four banditti are as dumb as so many fish. Abou-Daouk maintains his everlasting smile, and our Beni-Sakhars have assumed a proud and haughty demeanour befitting chieftains of importance; whilst Mohammed's black brow lowers, and he begins caressing the butt-end of his musket. As to Hamdan, he has turned very pale, and appears oppressed by intense anxiety.

By twenty-two minutes past three we have resumed our usual line of march; but, scarcely are we on the move again, when Scheikh Selameh, who sees Loysel lighting a pipe for his own use, takes it out of his hands without the least ceremony, and commences smoking it himself "The devil!" mutters each of us to himself (I more profoundly than the rest); "this familiarity is anything but agreeable!" We have thrust ourselves head-foremost into a hornet's nest. As there is no retreat, we put on a good countenance; while the thought of probable danger reassures our spirits, which had wavered for a moment. We are ourselves again, and enjoy our own humour, joking Loysel on the unfortunate rape of his pipe. Come what may, they shall not pick us off like partridges; we therefore summon up our courage and put our trust in Providence. I resume my geographical labours with Edward, and go on studying the country, which is as bare as ever. From Schihan to the bank of the Ouad-el-Karak,

there is not a tree or bush to be seen. By twenty-two minutes past three we march south-south-west, and the hill which we had on the right is now only fifty yards from our track. By thirty minutes past three we perceive some ruins on the side of this hill. Soon after that, several small mounds rise up to our left; and by forty minutes past three we find ourselves on the ridge of a descent leading us, in three minutes more, to the bottom of a ravine traversed by the ancient road, which we still continue following. As we go down, we observe on our right some old walls levelled with the ground. Having reached the bottom of the ouad, we march due west. This ouad, which we have just crossed at its commencement, runs in a north-north-west direction; we reach the opposite bank by still following the ancient road, which, bearing at first due west, inclines afterwards a little to the west-south-west. The ascent is difficult; flat and slippery rocks form the steps of a kind of giant's staircase, the summit of which we attain by fifty minutes past three. To our right we are bounded by the edge of a small low plain, which looks as if it were overhanging a deep and abrupt valley. To our left is a hillock, on the side of which we march, until we arrive at a small flat eminence ending in a frightful ravine, opening like an abyss before us. This ravine is called the Ouad-el-Karak.

The view is not calculated to cheer our spirits; a more convenient haunt for brigands could nowhere be selected; such at least is our first impression, which gathers new strength from the lowering aspect of the sky, overspread with grey, melancholy-looking clouds. We have to descend three hundred yards of almost perpendicular rock, and somewhat more to mount again

on the other side, before we reach the horrible vulture's nest which is called Karak.

At this moment Hamdan, looking quite scared, draws near, and whispers in my ear: "Do not take thy dwelling in the town; remain at the bottom of the valley, near the fountain we are about to pass, and say that thou preferrest encamping in this spot, on account of the vicinity of the water. The inhabitants of Karak are abominable robbers. Allah only knows what will happen to us all, if once thou dost consent to enter into their town."

Assuredly there was nothing very encouraging in this warning; but still, how could we avoid taking a temporary dwelling in the town without letting these people suppose that we were afraid of them? At any risk we must avoid showing the slightest symptom of uneasiness, if we wish to make them respect or fear us; and besides, how could we defend or extricate ourselves, supposing we were attacked at the bottom of such an abyss? Ten pieces of rock hurled down upon us from the top, during the night, would suffice to annihilate and pound us as in a mortar. I therefore answered Hamdan briefly, that we had come to visit Karak; that we intended to stay there for at least one day; and that we should assuredly fix our lodging in the town itself, to show that we were above all fear or apprehension.

"Ala khatrak" ("Do as thou pleasest") answered Hamdan, mildly, with a sigh, and turned away from me.

I have just stated that by fifty-six minutes past three we had reached a spot from whence we had merely to descend to reach the bottom of the Ouad-el-Karak. To our left opens a hollow valley, looking southward, and towards the bottom of which, about fifteen hundred yards

distant, our Arabs point out a ruin called El-Boueïreh (the small cistern). A kind of narrow cape, down which we are passing, juts out into the Ouad-el-Karak, and borders the entrance of the ouad where El-Boueïreh stands; this is the first break-neck precipice by which we accomplish our descent to the bottom of the valley.

We reach it, safe and sound, at twenty-three minutes past four o'clock. Here, as Hamdan had informed me, we find a fountain, and two grottoes hewn out of the rock; most likely two ancient burial caves. As night is coming on, it is too late to examine them beyond a passing glance, as we ride along. We have now before us the goat track that is to take us to the level of the isolated cliff, rising from the bottom of the valley, and on the summit of which is built the town of Karak.

The Scheikh Selameh does not afford us time enough to compliment him on the choice roads of his country. He urges his horse up the steep, and we follow his example, taking good care to avoid false steps, a single one of which would be a death-warrant. This perilous ascent lasts twelve minutes, during which we clamber up a long series of zig-zags, so close to each other, that every horseman has constantly above him the belly of the horse he follows, whilst he is himself equally raised above the heads of those who are following him. Nothing but a miracle saves the whole party from vertigo. If we add to the pleasures of this path, the necessity of forcing your charger to clear repeated masses of slippery rock, half a yard high, we perfectly understand how, on reaching the summit of this infernal cliff, we breathe more freely, and feel as if delivered from a hideous nightmare.

By thirty-five minutes past four a final turning brings

us to the foot of a square tower, twenty yards high, defending the approaches of the road we have just ascended. This tower occupies one of the salient angles of the town of Karak; from its side branches off a wretched enclosure wall turning towards the south, but we proceed along another branch inclining to the westward.

The whole population seem in a fever of enthusiasm at our visit, and anxious to receive us with all honour; for we find collected, at the foot of the enclosure wall, a mob of hideous faces, and a cordon of the same description lining the parapet wall above us.

Darkness is coming on apace, and after a few minutes we enter the town through a breach in the wall. We proceed through heaps of infected rubbish, and alight in a kind of enclosure, attached to a small stone house, divided from another stone building by a narrow court-yard only a few yards wide. The first structure is the Christian convent of Karak; the second, the church belonging to the convent. Two Greek clergymen reside in this dismal abode, and we have come to throw ourselves on their hospitality.

The Scheikh Selameh has disappeared, without our taking any notice of him. He carries our charitable wishes wherever he may have gone to, and none of us desire to see him again.

There are in Karak several hundreds of Christian Arabs; their chiefs—and, amongst others, a fine brave old man, called Abd-Allah-Sennâ, who is their principal Scheikh—have gathered around us, armed and equipped. These worthy people give us as kind a reception as they can; they take our offered hands, and kiss them, repeating over, again and again, that we are welcome.

We shall find amongst them our natural defenders, in the very probable circumstance of an attack from the Mussulman population.

As soon as we have alighted, we climb up a narrow staircase without rails, resting against the wall opposite the church, which leads us to the level of the first-floor. This is the usual dwelling-place of the two Greek monks, who remove their trifling effects as rapidly as they can from a square room, into which daylight can only enter by two windows without panes of glass, closed by wooden shutters badly jointed ; so that, in bad weather, by broad daylight, the in-dwellers are obliged to use candles. Our kitchen is disposed in a lower apartment, open to every comer ; whilst our camp-cots are set out in the square room offered to us by the good monks, and there we are in the trap. Shall we escape from it with all our feathers ? The chances are heavily against us.

No sooner are we in possession of our bed-room than it is instantly converted into a reception hall. Some twenty inhabitants of the place, Christians and Mohammedans, force their way in, whether we will or no, and squat down in every corner without the ceremony of asking leave. As their number increases every instant, they stow themselves in as closely as they can, leaving us barely sufficient space for ourselves. No doubt this officious attention is highly flattering, but we could readily dispense with it, as we are exhibiting the parts of wild-beasts in a show. The monks, to offer us a cup of coffee, are obliged to call us one at a time, and in succession, out of the room, and take us into a small nook containing their bedding, which they have removed from the place

they have given up to us, and piled up all the beds one above the other.

Matteo, on his part, serves up coffee to the people of distinction amongst our visitors; the lower gentry must do without it. After the coffee comes the pipe; and the Karakee grandees show themselves exceedingly fond of our tobacco. What they usually smoke, in the absence of the real *tootun*, is a coarse compound of the leaves and stalk of I know not what stuff; perhaps the *Datura stramonium*. We try some to oblige them; and I declare to the company very politely on the part of my friends, that it is excellent, whilst we unanimously vote it execrable.

Still we cannot entertain our guests for ever: hunger and fatigue make us anxious to obtain a little less honour and a little more solitude, and we succeed at last in remaining the exclusive possessors of our own apartment. We immediately lock ourselves in, and while dinner is preparing, communicate to each other our mutual impressions. As there is no one watching us at this moment, we express our opinions freely concerning our present position. Touching unanimity! We are all satisfied that we shall be very fortunate if we escape with our lives and a whole skin from the renowned city of Karak.

As soon as we have finished our dinner, we throw ourselves, without undressing, upon our camp-beds, with our complete arsenal loaded, primed, and ready for action at a moment's notice.

CHAPTER X.

Mohammed-el-Midjielly, the Scheikh of Karak—Jealousies of the different tribes—Invasion of unwelcome guests—The Christians of Karak—Examination of the city—Tower of Sultan Beibars—Gratuitous insults—The Christian Scheikh Abd-Allah—Exorbitant demand for supposed protection—Low state of exchequer—A loan contracted in the desert—Musical box—Preparations for departure—Castle of Renaud de Châtillon—More insults and extortion—A dangerous quarrel—Escape from the thieves of Karak—The journey resumed—Evidences of volcanic agency—Encamping ground reached, on the banks of the Nahr-ed-Diâa—Prognostics of rain.

January 19th.

As regards this night, all our apprehensions proved unfounded. We have slept as quietly as possible, notwithstanding the war of extermination waged against us by the insatiable vermin. The weather, which has been very severe, has cleared up a little. The wind is still blowing with violence, but the rainy squalls have discontinued for the moment, and we suffer intensely from the cold. Having just left the shores of the Dead Sea, we are not inured to the rude temperature of the high plains, and we pass our time in shivering and complaining.

This morning, I have deemed it prudent to open negotiations with the Scheikh of Karak, and to beat the ground so as to ascertain what treatment we are to expect. Hamdan and Matteo, especially the latter, are our plenipotentiaries. I had brought a letter from the Pacha of Jerusalem, for the Scheikh Mohammed-el-

Midjielly, and I entrust Matteo with the care of delivering it to him, and demanding his protection.

Matteo meets with a very rude reception. Midjielly is furious because we have taken up our quarters in the Greek convent; and still more so, that we have been well received by the Christians of Karak. As to the Pacha's letter, he has no leisure for reading messages of that kind. "Carry it to Abd-Allah," says he to Matteo, "since I am no longer Scheikh in my own government, and since he is the man to whom strangers apply in the first instance, when they come to visit the country wherein I command." Matteo employs all the diplomatic skill he can master, to appease this ferocious little autocrat. Very probably he hints something about presents in perspective! for Midjielly replies that he wants nothing from us; that he does not sell his protection: and that if I give him a *louleh* (a pipe-bowl), as a keepsake and remembrance of my passing visit, he will ask no more; that I may remain in Karak ten days, a fortnight, a month, if I choose; inspect at my leisure all the remnants of antiquity scattered through the country, and that I have nothing to fear.

Matteo hastens back to us, bursting with intelligence, to report this magnanimous answer; on which, I confess, I place very little reliance. Hamdan, who is present, is equally suspicious of the good faith of Midjielly; evidently he considers him, for choice, the sample knave of the country.

At this moment we receive news which is not likely to increase our confidence. Our Beni-Sakhars are enraged, because the people of the bazaar, by order of the Scheikh, refuse to sell them meal for themselves and barley for

their horses. At the same time the Scheikh Mohammed requests me to send them away, saying that it would be injurious to his honour were I to remain in his town, under any other protection than his own. At first, I am simple enough to find this sensitiveness rather natural, and am almost inclined to comply with his request, when Matteo tells me, in Italian, to beware of doing so, and to refuse most positively, though I may qualify my refusal as politely as I please. Instinctively Edward adopts the same opinion ; therefore, I return for answer to Midjielly that I have sworn before Allah not to pay the Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs until I return to their encampment ; that I have had every reason to be satisfied with their services and their fidelity, and that since they have religiously kept their word, I cannot, without proving myself a recreant, fail to keep mine : that I repose the most complete reliance on the word of the Scheikh Mohammed ; that I am completely under his exclusive protection, since I have placed myself within the walls of his town, and that consequently he has no cause to be incensed at such a trifle. I request at the same time that he will be pleased to give the necessary orders to enable all my people to purchase such provisions as they may require for themselves and their beasts.

All this is said in presence of a band of armed banditti, who have invaded our premises ever since the morning, and who are making themselves at home, with the careless familiarity of gaolers who are keeping guard over their prisoners. As soon as I have despatched my refusal, Matteo tells me, still in Italian as a matter of course, that the presence of the Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs is exceedingly irksome to Midjielly, as checking the

schemes he is contriving against us. The brigand knows full well, that if he was to do us any mischief, he would bring down upon himself the whole tribe, and that he would then assuredly be starved to death in his den, he and his band of robbers, without the slightest hope of escape. His asking us to dismiss our friends was a skilful move, as, if we had complied, we should have given such offence to the Beni-Sakhars, that they would have left us to shift for ourselves, and get out of the scrape as well as we might.

Fortunately, Hamdan and Matteo are as cunning as Midjielly, and, with their Arab instinct, have penetrated and baffled his design. All this has an unfavourable aspect, and we are beginning to get tired of the inconvenient, impertinent surveillance to which we have been subjected since daybreak. By dint of loud and angry expostulations we succeed once more in obtaining exclusive possession of our own room, for time sufficient to take our breakfast. We have just drank our coffee, and are smoking our chibouks in tolerable quiet, when a tremendous noise is suddenly heard at the door, at which people are striking with a tone of authority. We open, and in rushes a host of the most ill-looking varlets that can be imagined, led by Mohammed-el-Midjielly in person, his worthy nephew, the Scheikh Selameh, and another shabby-looking fellow, Scheikh Khalil, Midjielly's own brother. These are the three living representatives of the illustrious family of the Scheikhs of Karak, a family which has supplied in its different branches a rich harvest for the gallows and the scaffold, under the Turkish and Egyptian sovereignties.

Midjielly is a very little man, wearing with the dignity

of a sovereign prince, the tattered garb of a Bedouin Scheikh, the scarlet robe, the black abaya, and the variegated kafieh. He carries, in addition, a Turkish sabre by his side. His features are perfectly regular, his eyes quick and piercing, but their expression is treacherous, distrustful, and malicious beyond measure; the nose is straight and well formed, the lips thin, and singularly white. A short black beard, sprucely trimmed, is set as a frame around the handsome face of this individual, in whose presence you feel uneasy, because you can trace in his features no aspect of sincerity, but rather that of systematic duplicity, under every word and movement. The hands and feet of Midjielly are of the most exquisite delicacy, and as his limbs are in constant motion whilst speaking, we have full leisure and opportunity to admire the elegant proportions of this ragged specimen of majesty.

Scheikh Selameh, with whom we have had the honour of becoming acquainted since yesterday, is, as I have said already, a complete model of sensual brutality. He has the look and demeanour of a galley slave. Scheikh Khalil, on the contrary, is a fine handsome fellow, taller and more elegantly made than Mohammed. He seems, however, to be thrust completely into the background, probably because he cannot equal in rascality his illustrious brother, and no less distinguished nephew Selameh.

The three Scheikhs seat themselves without ceremony upon our camp-beds; all the gentlemen of their suite following the example. Some of the beds break down under the unusual weight, and all receive liberal contributions of the domestic intimates by whom these gentlemen are invariably attended.

Mixed with the crowd, I see the Scheikh Abd-Allah, his son, and the other Christians who, the evening before, have welcomed and visited us at the convent. Their presence gives me confidence. Supposing that our conversation should take a serious turn, no very unlikely event, we have here friends on the spot, who would assist us, and enable us at least to sell our lives dearly.

Mohammed scarcely speaks, and only utters now and then a few words with a haughty and disdainful air. Coffee and pipes are brought in; but every one looks mistrustfully on his neighbour, as if doubtful and anxious as to what will follow next.

After a quarter of an hour, which seems a century, Midjielly rises, and invites us to accompany him. He proposes to do the honours of his town, and exhibit to us its monuments. In a twinkling we are on our legs, cramming our waistbands and pockets with pistols, under the very beards of the convocation. We then start on our exploring tour, leaving Philippe and Louis to guard the camp, with orders to keep a strict watch, and to drive back, at any hazard, the intruders, who, tempted by the desire of stealing our arms, might wander in that direction during our absence.

I forgot to say that during the conversation Midjielly inquired if I had a telescope. I answered him that I had. Immediately he asked me to let him see it; and, after having tried it, he made a polite grimace, saying: "I have a better one than that." We were next obliged to show him all our arms, guns and pistols, single and double. This time he could not boast of having something better, and he looked, with an air of desperate covetousness, at our double-barrelled rifles, and at our four and

eight-barrelled pistols. These last inspired him with intense admiration. We took the hint, and forthwith ornamented our waistbands with an additional brace before commencing the ramble so politely suggested to us.

We have issued from our prison, threading muddy lanes filled with every possible description of filth, scrambling incessantly over heaps of rubbish, remains of buildings crushed down by Ibrahim Pacha's artillery, and followed by a host of armed men who accompany us, as if we were captives in close custody. At every step, words of abuse strike upon our ears ; we adopt the wiser plan, and pretend not to understand them.

Having traversed the whole extent of the town, we reach the western point of the rock, on the summit of which Karak is built, and find ourselves in front of an immense tower, forming a demi-parallelogram, and commanding the only road by which it is practicable to descend from Karak to the Rhôr-Safieh ; that is to say, to the southern point of the Dead Sea. An interior gallery, with five ogival openings, encircles the tower at the level of the first floor. The entrance is by a gate in the posterior face of the smaller side on the right of the building. A long and very fine Arabic inscription, flanked by two rampant lions, similar to those that are seen on the Egyptian coins of the Mameluke Sultan, El-Malek-ed-Dhaher-Beïbars (who reigned from 1260 to 1277), appears below the gallery. I read a part of it in presence of Midjielly and his courtiers, who, to a certainty, are quite incapable of understanding a single word. I know not if they are astonished at my learning ; but be that as it may, they give no external expression to

their astonishment, beyond smiles and the attention with which they listen to my expounding.

I have a great desire to copy this monumental inscription, but I am not master of my actions at present, and am soon told to leave the place. Nevertheless I have obtained the information I most desired, namely, that this military structure was built by Beïbars, between 1260 and 1277, and this approximate date must satisfy me, since I cannot get the precise one, which a copy of the inscription itself would have most certainly given me; that copy, however, would have been difficult, owing to the height at which the tablet is placed.

From thence Midjielly takes us to a small cistern, hewn out of the rock, close to the tower which we have just visited; then to a tunnel, which serves as entrance to the town, and makes an angle within the rock, so as to issue upon the road that leads down to the Dead Sea, and which road is commanded by the tower of Beïbars. The rock is a very compact calcareous chalk, intersected by well defined layers of dark brown flint. At the spot where the tunnel makes the angle, the vaulted roof is pierced by a shaft, intended to give light; but this passage is not kept in better order than all the other lanes, being equally encumbered with stones and filth.

Above the exterior gate, formed of solid masonry, another Arabic inscription, almost unintelligible, and much defaced by having been pelted with stones, is let into the wall. Whilst I am blundering in my attempt to decipher the half-erased characters, Midjielly, who has paused to give my science a second trial, finds, probably, that I do not read fast enough, for he compels me once

more to quit the premises, and conducts me back into Karak by the same tunnel.

He then leads the way to a very large ruined cistern, encumbered with hewn stones; this seems to me much more ancient than anything I have seen as yet in the relics of this town. Here, again, in the midst of the rubbish, is an Arabic inscription, quite as illegible as that over the gate, and which it would require much leisure and perseverance to decipher. But how is it possible to give attention to these matters, when you are jostled, pestered, and insulted? I use this last word in its full meaning; for, as I am stooping to examine this inscription, one of the vile brigands escorting us, having got on the top of the cistern wall, spits down upon me. My friends have seen the outrage, and give me instant warning. I am sorely tempted to pay him with a bullet, but just as I am yielding to my indignation, I reflect that such is precisely the object these people are aiming at; and that I shall bring down immediate and certain death upon my brave companions, who, through their confidence in me, have ventured into this den of cut-throats. I feel that the greatest proof of courage I can exhibit is to pass by the insult with contempt, and only express my resentment by saying to Midjielly that the protection which he has promised me is not worth much, since it cannot even prevent the men under his command from spitting upon his guests. Midjielly replies, chuckling with a malicious and treacherous air, "Oh! it is nothing; we must not mind the follies of children!"

It may easily be supposed that from this moment I am sick of the ramble; I announce to the Scheikh that I wish to return to the convent, and he accordingly leads

me back. On our way he brings me round by the walls of a ruined mosque, the door of which is surmounted by an Arabic inscription, well preserved; but I am no longer scientifically disposed. Besides it begins to rain smartly at this moment, which drives us under cover as fast as possible.

During this agreeable promenade I have picked up here and there geological specimens—some fragments of ancient pottery, similar to those I found near the Redjom-el-Aabed, and a small cube of glass, which has certainly formed a portion of a Roman mosaic.

The Scheikh Khalil has left us on the way; but Mohammed and Selameh are not inclined so soon to lose sight of their prey. They return with us to the convent, and once more our apartment is invaded by the friendly visitors into whose clutches we have thrown ourselves so imprudently. The two Scheikhs sit down carelessly upon Philippe's bed, which immediately gives way under them. As these gentlemen have sharpened their appetites by their airing, they order in something to eat, as familiarly as if they were at home, and a large omelet is immediately set before them. They divide it with their fingers, adding the accompaniment of a huge lump of bread. After having taken coffee, and a pipe, they leave us, and allow us a little breathing time, to prepare ourselves for the vexations of the evening, for they promise to repeat their visit an hour after our dinner.

Scarcely have they left the room, when Matteo introduces to our presence a tall strapping fellow, dressed in a scarlet robe of distinction, who has a particular wish to speak with us. As soon as he has entered, and the door is closed behind him, he tells us that Midjielly is an

impudent puppy, that he has used us shabbily, and that if we choose to be revenged, he (the new comer himself) is ready to assist us with all his people. Is this man really an enemy of Midjielly, or is it a decoy of the latter gentleman, to lead us into a new trap? As I am very much inclined to suspect this, I diplomatise in my turn, and tell the intruder that if Midjielly has given himself airs at first, he has since appeared to assume in reality the character of our protector in Karak; that consequently I have no hostile feelings towards him, and that I intend starting as soon as possible on my return to Jerusalem, without intermeddling with anybody's quarrels. Upon that our visitor left us. As there were crowds of Arabs squatting round our door, within hearing of every word that was said in the room, if the Scheikh just mentioned was not an emissary of that crafty knave, Midjielly, he profited little by his interference; at any rate, we saw no more of him.

The remainder of the day wears away slowly enough whilst we employ ourselves in philosophising on our present position. How to get out of the scrape without damage becomes hourly a more intricate problem, which we endeavour to solve without success. We keep up our spirits, notwithstanding; laugh, jest, and amuse ourselves as usual, whenever we are left alone.

Before dinner, the Scheikh Abd-Allah came to pay us a short visit, and as we were just then in high good humour, we entertained him with the performance of a musical-box, which he listened to with profound admiration. I told him there was a little animal shut up in the box, and that it was this creature who produced the music. Abd-Allah swallowed the information eagerly, and, no doubt,

on leaving us, hurried to display his superior knowledge to all his friends and acquaintances, telling them how the Feringhees confine little insects in boxes to make them sing, with no more trouble than tickling their tails with a small piece of iron. Such was indeed the only explanation I had been able to give him ; any other would have been quite incomprehensible. Besides, as he was naturally intelligent, he had arrived, of his own accord, at something like the same conclusion. The reader will see, by-and-by, that Providence had again inspired us, and that the little concert to which we had treated Abd-Allah, assisted in the end in extricating us from a troublesome dilemma.

Dinner being over, we wait in expectation of the promised visit; I may even say, we are impatient for it, since our fate evidently depends on the result. Either we shall be at liberty to depart to-morrow, or we must remain in Midjielly's clutches, and then Heaven only knows what will become of us.

The honest Scheikh of Karak exhibits, in this instance, the punctilious ceremony of a king, unless we may prefer calling it the vigilance of a bailiff. The hour of payment has duly struck, we must be ready with our contributions, and Midjielly is too polite to keep us waiting. He enters accordingly, looking colder and more important than ever, attended by his honourable nephew Selameh. Hamdan and Matteo are the only others present, all the Bedouins having received from the Scheikh his gracious permission to go about their business.

Coffee and pipes being despatched, we proceed to business, which I open with a display of all the Arabic I can muster, in the hope of producing an effect.

I fancy I am making a masterly move, by treating

seriously, the magnanimous answer of the morning with regard to the presents hinted at by Matteo, and I take advantage of the *louleh* (souvenir) that has been asked for, to extol the generosity of the powerful Scheikh who has so kindly received us into his town. Of course, I omit all allusion to the practical joke passed upon me in his noble company. After having said all this, I add that people like us, Frenchmen, cannot allow anybody to take the lead, or set them examples in magnanimity or liberality; that such a thing would make us all seriously ill, &c., &c.

In short, after much preliminary eloquence, I come to the point. I take my double-barrelled gun, a splendid one of the Corsican Voltigeurs; I cock and uncock it, and announce to the Scheikh that it is unquestionably the first weapon of the kind in the world. In this assertion I scarcely exceeded the truth; although I did in the exorbitant price at which I rated it, to increase the value in the eyes of Midjielly. After the gun, I exhibit a pair of good cavalry pistols, upon which I lavish the same encomiums as to cost and quality. This done, "to thee," I say, "Scheikh Mohammed-el-Midjielly, I give this magnificent fusil, as a remembrance of my visit to thy country, and as a token of my tender friendship. To thee, Scheikh Selameh, this no less magnificent pair of pistols."

I had thus, without intending it, plunged into a worse dilemma than ever. My speech ended, I examine the countenances of my hearers, and, first of all, those of Hamdan and Matteo. Hamdan, in particular, looks the picture of discontent and despair. Midjielly and his nephew express their high sense of my generosity, by increased coldness and insolence of deportment.

I feel somewhat confounded, waiting for what is to come

next, when Matteo whispers me in Italian: "You have made a pretty piece of work of it; you have now got into the mire too deeply to extricate yourself!" This ill-timed remark, and perhaps also a little of the ill-temper of an author whose piece has been hissed, drives me beyond all patience; I change my tone, talk louder, and am not quite sure that I do not even swear a little, telling Matteo to demand at once, and without circumlocution, what more these thieves pretend to exact from us.

Thereupon, a cabinet council, in a suppressed tone, is held between the two brigands and our plenipotentiaries, which ends by the demand in hard cash, of the price of the weapons I had offered to the uncle and nephew, and which they suspect to be even of higher value than I chose to acknowledge. As the request seems to me of equivocal delicacy, I try to follow the maxim, "if you have to deal with a pirate, be a pirate and a half!" and therefore depreciate as much as I can the standard of my rejected presents, offering in exchange fifteen hundred piastres; upon which Midjielly laughs in my face, and gives a point-blank refusal.

A second council then takes place, in a lower whisper than the first, and lasting much longer. At length the ultimatum is delivered; they *must* have two thousand piastres, besides three abayas, three kafiehs, and three pairs of boots. As I knew by experience that not to take Arabs at their word, in negotiations of this kind, is to expose ourselves to perpetually increasing exactions, I hasten to comply at once. I think I have reached the end of my troubles, when Midjielly suddenly remembers that he has a dearly beloved brother to whom he wishes to make a small present at our expense. He has the

impudence to exact, in addition, ten rhazis (or two hundred piastres) to be given to Khalil as a bakhshish. I grant them at once; but now his wolfish voracity increases as he devours; he must have besides for this same Khalil, another abaya, another kafieh, and another pair of boots. Though I had made up my mind to give them, I perceive that I must resist this overwhelming tide of exactions, or it will flow on for ever. I give vent to my displeasure in an angry tone, and declare that I will treat no longer with Midjielly; that he may go and settle with Matteo, and that we desire to be left alone.

The anxiety to finger our gold pieces induces the two honourable Scheikhs to close the sitting at once. They leave us without our exchanging the slightest expression of politeness; but I must not forget to mention here that I have insisted upon the condition of the Scheikh Mohammed-el-Midjielly accompanying us in person, as far as the first encampment of the Beni-Sakhars, in the Rhôr-Safieh. He has bound himself to comply.

Scarcely are we rid of our two rapacious blood-suckers, when the Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs enter to ask for their salary. Either the people of Karak have been selling them their spices at an exorbitant rate, or else these gentlemen are anxious to profit by their sojourn in this elegant metropolis to lay in a stock of those luxurious trifles which are essential to their pretensions as fashionable Bedouins.

This fresh inroad on our finances occasions general discontent. Who knows if, when they are paid, the Scheikhs will serve us with the same fidelity? I refuse resolutely to comply with their request, and signify that, since I have engaged upon oath to pay them on the day

when we return to their tents, I need not and will not disburse until that day arrives. They continue importunate, stating that they are distressed by absolute want—the necessity of meeting their own expenses and the expenses of their people. I give in at last, and consent to pay them two-thirds of the sum contracted for. I send them to the treasury—that is, to Philippe, who is our purse-bearer, and to Matteo, who serves out the cash to the Bedouins.

Speaking of our treasury, it has fallen to an ebb that causes us much uneasiness, and has been so often drawn upon since our departure from Jerusalem, that the balance is almost a cipher. A rencontre with another tribe or two, and we shall have nothing but our good looks to offer in payment for Bedouin hospitality. This is as much as to say that we run a considerable risk of returning to Jerusalem without our clothes, even if we are fortunate enough to return at all.

We have, however, succeeded in contracting a loan in the desert, and the affair is so incredible that I cannot help detailing it. On the day when we left the encampment of Kharbet-Fouqouâ, near Schihan, a brilliant idea suggested itself, which I immediately carried into execution. We had still attached to our caravan the cattle-dealer, Mohammed-el-Qodsy, who was on his way to Karak, with the intention of purchasing some sheep. Most probably he was furnished with a certain sum in gold, which if we could contrive to borrow from him, our exhausted money-bags might swell again to their ordinary bulk.

I desired Matteo to sound him ; he made no objection to accommodate us, and the conditions were soon ar-

ranged. Matteo had asked him, in my name, what profit he expected to make by his intended speculation in Karak? Mohammed answered, eight hundred piastres. Now, he carried with him two thousand piastres in gold. I offered to borrow his two thousand piastres, and to give him in exchange two thousand eight hundred on the day when we should arrive at Jerusalem. He agreed most willingly to our proposal; but a good Mussulman cannot lend money on interest, the Koran positively forbids it. It was, therefore, necessary to hit on some contrivance to baffle the prophet, and thus we settle it: Mohammed sold his horse to Matteo for a thousand piastres, and Matteo resold it back to him immediately for two hundred, which established a balance of eight hundred piastres in favour of Mohammed. This sum Matteo bound himself to pay at Jerusalem, in the manner and at the date prescribed. The double bargain was concluded with many graspings of the hands, solemnly delivered in token of mutual good faith. I then deliver to Mohammed-el-Qodsy a bill for two thousand piastres, to be paid in gold at our banker's, and we forthwith pocketed his money. At the rate we were spending, these piastres were not likely to remain long in our possession, and indeed they very soon changed owners.

Having dismissed our Beni-Sakhars, we looked for no more dunning visits; but we deceived ourselves again. It is now Scheikh Khalil's turn, who enters in a state of high excitement, and insists upon receiving two thousand piastres instead of the two hundred that his brother had asked for him. "I am as much of a Scheikh as Mohammed," says he, "and have equal pretensions to the same treatment; it is an insult to give me ten miserable rhazis;

a shameful degradation; I demand one hundred." On this new stone falling upon our heads, we get into a passion, and angry words are likely to ensue.

But Scheikh Abd-Allah has told Khalil of the musical-box; and curious, like a true Bedouin, in the midst of his anger he asks us to let him see the box, and hear a song from the little animal enclosed in it. I see here a reed to cling to, and I catch at it like a drowning man. I take out the box with much parade from the paltry jewel-casket we have brought with us; I wind it up and place it upon the table. Khalil is lost in wonder; and ten times running we are compelled to wind up the box, and listen to the monotonous tunes of this wearisome piece of mechanism.

Our Bedouin, his eyes sparkling like carbuncles, at last exclaims involuntarily, "Give it me as a bakhshish!" a proposal I reject with indignation, to increase his anxiety for possession. I tell him that this box, which has cost exactly seven francs and a-half, is worth many thousands of piastres, that it is our sweetest consolation in all difficulties, and that I cannot consent to part with it on any terms. But Khalil is a ladies' man, and keeps a harem; getting the little creature to sing for his mistresses will make him an object of their general admiration. So he perseveres in his entreaties, and lays his hand upon the box. As I am quite satisfied he will break the spring the first time he attempts to wind it up, I tell him that the little creature gets tired of singing, and that after some tickling it falls asleep. "Let us see," say I to him, "if it is still awake;" and I wind the box up again, producing another serenade.

When the music is over, Khalil insists absolutely upon

my giving him a lesson in the art of tickling. I hold his hand to make him leave off at the proper time, and the jingling is renewed; then he wants to do it by himself. I hear a little cracking noise of bad omen, and tell our man that the creature has just gone to sleep, and will repose for four-and-twenty hours, as the day has been a very fatiguing one. In four-and-twenty hours we hope to be a good way off; and then we shall care little for what may happen. At last, the Scheikh can contain himself no longer. "Leave me thy box," says he, "and I will be content with the ten rhazis thou hast already given me." I cry "done" at once, and, pretending great fatigue, turn out my visitor. Khalil deposits the precious little box in his bosom with anxious solicitude. He has obtained an amusing trinket, for which, by his own estimate he has paid eighteen hundred piastres. The price may be considered dear.

At last, thank heaven! we are alone, and we throw ourselves upon our cots. But now comes Francis, Rothschild's dragoman, to tell us that it is impossible we can start to-morrow, because our horses want shoeing. I am near deciding to remain another day in Karak, when Edward offers this objection: "The thought is absurd," says he; "here we have a chance of getting out of this horrible den of cut-throats, and we choose, of our own free will, to remain in it twenty-four hours longer! The thing is impossible. Let our horses be with or without shoes, we must get on. So much the worse for the moukris, if they have neglected to have them shod. Besides, it has been raining for the last two days; and, above all, remember the Sabkhah; do you think it will be easy to cross it?" At this mention of the

Sabkhah, my hesitation ceases; in my turn I am impatient to find myself on the western shore of the Dead Sea; it seems to me that, if once there, we should feel at home. We send Francis to the right-about, and decide that our departure shall take place irrevocably to-morrow morning. Francis retires sulkily and grumbling. We pay him no attention, and hasten to get to sleep, anticipating the enjoyment of to-morrow's liberty.

January 20th.

By dawn we are all up and packing as fast as possible. The moukris have been ordered to be expeditious in loading their animals, for it is our wish and hope to be off without the loss of a minute. Alas! once more we have reckoned without our hosts. When all is ready for a start, in comes Midjielly and all his gang. He will not suffer us to take leave of him without having seen the ruins of the castle, to which he is come to conduct us in person. One hour is sufficient for this reconnoissance.

It is scarcely possible to refuse, and, who knows? Perhaps in this hour, divided between curiosity and prudence, we may make some interesting discovery. We prepare to accompany the Scheikh without delay, when Francis Dzaloglou rushes in, in a frenzy: he has been robbed of his sabre, which cost him four hundred piastres at Damascus—a splendid weapon, according to his statement. He roars like a madman, and, to appease him a little, I bring his complaint immediately before the Scheikh. "One of thy followers has just stolen a sword from us," say I; "and it depends upon thee that it shall be recovered; give thy orders in consequence, since we are under thy protection."

This request seems to annoy Midjielly considerably; but, as he cannot pass it by, he orders that it shall be cried publicly in the streets of Karak that a sword has been stolen from the strangers, and that it must be brought back immediately. The haughty reproaches of our Beni-Sakhar chieftains have contributed not a little to persuade Mohammed to a course evidently most unpalatable.

After this little episode, we proceed towards the castle; the crowd of curious idlers has not decreased, and they look even more insolent than on the day before. Arrived within the enclosure of the old castle of Renaud de Châtillon, we are first led to the church, which is now a kind of large market-place, with nothing but the four walls left, but still retaining, here and there, traces of Christian pictures, effaced and unintelligible. Blended in with the masonry are various fragments which have been taken from ancient monuments; such, for instance, as ornamental leaves in bas-relief, and some strange mouldings. To the right of the gate by which you enter the church, a block of lava is fixed into the wall at about eight or ten feet from the ground. Upon this block are carved, and still distinguishable, the principal features of a well-known Egyptian symbol, the mystical eye of Horus (the Apollo of the Egyptians). Not to lose time, I request Belly to sketch it correctly, whilst I am following Midjielly through the still stupendous ruins of the buildings, formerly appropriated as dwelling-places.

To reach the upper story, we are obliged to scramble over the rubbish, and through holes scarcely large enough to allow a man's body to pass. Clambering up in this

manner, at the risk of breaking our necks, we reach the battlements crowning the top of the walls. From this point the view is magnificent, and the eye at once perceives the extent and importance of this remarkable military structure. Nothing would have been easier than taking from this eminence a plan of all the works comprised within the fortress; but I confess freely I could not set my mind to the work: every moment I dreaded treachery—at every step I looked for a snare, and I had no thought but that of seeing our whole party safe and sound out of Karak.

We hastened again down, using the same ruined and encumbered staircase by which we had ascended, and found ourselves, to our no small satisfaction, on the level platform of the castle. Proceeding then southward, to a spot where the enclosure wall rises perpendicularly above the valley that winds round the basis of the mountain upon which Karak is perched, we discovered, for the first time, a glacis made of huge blocks of well-squared stones, forming an inclined plane, which no besiegers in the world could have got over.

We were also led into a vast hall, having another subterranean chamber below it. The existence of this last, we ascertained from the circumstance that the vault forming the floor of the upper hall had been pierced through.

Whilst Belly was busied sketching, he had been savagely insulted by an Arab. As soon as I was informed of this, I complained to the Scheikh Midjielly, who gave me no redress beyond a silent sneer. In all probability this time again a trap had been laid for us; and, if Belly had allowed himself to be carried away by

his strong inclination to revenge, with a pistol-shot, the insult he had suffered, it would have been all up with us, and we should have perished to a man in five minutes. This was the very point to which they wanted to provoke us, and I am thankful to Providence that in these dangerous moments we had enough of cool self-command to reject the easier courage of immediate retaliation. Certainly we have shown more head and judgment, in avoiding the snares to which we were exposed, than if we had given way to passion, and paid off these premeditated insults with summary chastisement. What could five men achieve, however determined, against a thousand assassins panting for a pretence to cut our throats? We might sell our lives bravely and dearly, it is true; but what then? What would have become of the interesting discoveries we have made with so much labour and expense? They would have been lost for ever! We were wise and patient enough to listen to the dictates of philosophy, to endure our insults, and to smother up our rage in perfect silence.

The reader will easily understand that we were not particularly desirous to prolong our visit to the castle of Karak; I therefore signified to Midjielly that we wished to return to the convent to breakfast, and then immediately to mount our horses and proceed to the Rhôr. We retraced our steps to the convent, and on our way there I procured from the son of the Christian Scheikh Abd-Allah a gold bead, some cornelian beads, and a cylinder of enamelled earth, being the fragments of a Moabitic collar which had been found some time previously in a small vase dug up at the bottom of the valley. In exchange for these curious specimens of jewellery

I slipped a rhazi, worth twenty piastres, into the hand of the vendor, who seemed quite pleased with his bargain.

On our return to the convent, we find Philippe still under the strong emotion of a recent alarm. We had left him singly to guard our arms, and whilst we were in the castle, some Arabs attempted to enter our room by force, no doubt to make a general pillage of everything they could lay their hands upon. At first, a single thief had presented himself, and had been roughly ejected by Philippe, who then locked himself into the room; but, almost immediately, the intruder returned with three more birds of the same feather, and began assaulting the door with such noise and violence, that Philippe, losing all patience, threw it open, and, presenting an eight-barrelled pistol right in their teeth, scattered the enemy in a twinkling.

This scene had just terminated as we came in. Each of us immediately assumed all his weapons, and from that moment the chances of our being murdered in cold blood became considerably diminished, as we were now well prepared for defence, and able to oppose a stout resistance.

Of course, we can procure no information respecting the sword of our man Francis, whose ill-humour increases in consequence. At last, our breakfast is announced; we swallow it hastily, that we may depart at once; but the endless delays of our moukris detain us more than an additional hour, and the reader may imagine the feverish impatience under which we suffer. All the men composing our escort are forthcoming, and once more mustered around us. The storm that threatened so boisterously, has blown over without much damage. Our

spirits rise in proportion, although we are still within the walls of Karak. At last we are in the saddle, but we are yet condemned to waste nearly half an hour more, which seems at least a century, until the whole caravan is reported ready. But, even during this half-hour, we have added something to our travelling education in Arabia. Scarcely am I mounted, when Mohammed-el-Midjielly draws near, and says to me, with the most consummate effrontery in the world: "Yesterday thou hast offered me thy double-barrelled gun. Well! give it me now?" Need I say that this modest request enrages me? "I have given thee," replied I, "all that thou shalt have from me; thou hast preferred money to the gun. I have paid the money; thou shalt have nothing more. But still, I have been robbed of a splendid sword; one of thy men is the thief; if thou canst recover it, I give thee that also." "Khatrak-el-khair!" ("I thank thee!") rejoins the miserable varlet. Evidently either himself or his brother Khalil have procured the abduction of the sword.

One of our Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs overhears this short conversation; and, taking it up with an animated voice, reproaches Midjielly bitterly for his infamous behaviour towards us:—"These strangers were thy guests," says he; "they have all paid liberally for their welcome, and thou allowest one of thy followers to steal a sword from them! Amongst the Beni-Sakhars, if such a thing was to happen, dost thou hear, Scheikh Mohammed, the tribe would give the Frenchman ten swords, handsomer than the one he had lost, and the robber would be punished, even so as to cure him of his tricks. But here you are all thieves, and you don't know how a guest is to be

protected." The lesson, though severe, was digested without a word in reply by the Scheikh of Karak, who has sense enough not to take umbrage at such reproaches as may be addressed to him by a brother Scheikh, of the powerful tribe of Beni-Sakhar.

After Midjielly, his nephew Selameh has the impudence to approach, and demand the pistols I had offered him yesterday, before our negotiations merged into a financial compromise. I tell him, unceremoniously, he may go to the devil; asking him, at the same time, if he takes me for a fool. These were the last words I exchanged with the respectable Scheikh Selameh of Karak.

At length the word is given that everything is ready. I direct our beasts of burden to be led off in front, and we follow in good order. Mohammed-el-Midjielly, who has been the last to vault into the saddle, is, I must confess, one of the most accomplished cavaliers you can desire to look on. He makes his horse prance and caper gracefully, as he rides by the side of our friends the Scheikhs. We remark that he is not armed, as people of his race generally are when about to undertake an excursion of several leagues. But we think little of this circumstance, so accustomed are we to find the Arabs religious observers of plighted faith. Mohammed carries at present no weapon but his chibouk. He is the only one of his family accompanying us; all his intimates have disappeared; but, in their stead, Scheikh Abd-Allah, with his son, and four or five other Christians, well armed with muskets and khandjars, have joined our escort, without any previous understanding. Their company is far from being disagreeable to us, but I am quite sure Midjielly could dispense with it very willingly.

We have passed safely through the vile accumulation of rubbish which is called Karak, and are approaching the tunnel-gate which we had visited yesterday, when one of the exquisites of the place—a young man, of about five-and-twenty years old, his eyes painted round with a circle of *cohol*, and his long hair braided over his temples—a vagabond, who had dogged our heels during our two rambles through the town, uttering abuses—at the same time takes it into his head to give us a parting farewell after a fashion of his own. This time we are in a position to punish his impertinence smartly. Midjielly is fully aware that it is so, and consequently he prefers doing it himself with a good grace. He pushes his horse straight up to the man with the painted eyes, and breaks against the fellow's head the pipe of his chibouk, hurled with all his might. Everybody laughs, except the delinquent, who was unprepared for this salute, and retires, repeatedly rubbing his head with both his hands, and howling piteously.

While we are passing through the tunnel, stones are hurled down upon us through the hole in the vaulted roof, as a preliminary to the farewell salute prepared a little further on. As we clear the gate and enter upon the road, we receive from our kind friends in Karak, ranged on the top of the wall, a regular volley of stones, which luckily does no harm, and merely induces us to quicken our pace.

It is nearly half-past eleven when we issue from the town, and follow the descent leading to the foot of the tower of Beïbars. In less than five minutes we wind along the outward face of this tower, through the ditch running before it, and forming the continuation of the

high road we are now following. Before coming to this ditch, the Scheikh Mohammed-el-Midjielly draws near, stammers out some phrase of doubtful politeness, after which, without waiting for my answer, he immediately turns his horse round, and rides off at a gallop towards his robbers' nest. "Go thy ways, wretch! and may Heaven confound thee!" is the universal blessing which we send after him at parting; we then spur our horses, and amble away with light hearts from this city of disaster.

The ditch of Beïbars being passed, two windings of the road take us up to a flat eminence, not more than ten yards wide, and rising perpendicularly above the Ouad-el-Karak. We march then in a north-westerly direction. By forty-two minutes past eleven we reach a steep ridge, where the road turns and goes down abruptly, and with short zig-zags, to another inclined plane bearing more to the west than the first. Soon after this we enter on a series of very short, narrow, and abrupt windings, taking us again, by fifty-two minutes past eleven, in front of the tower of Beïbars, scarcely a hundred yards from the left extremity of its anterior face, but two hundred yards lower down in perpendicular height. Here the road makes another turn, and the tower, which was on our left, shifts immediately to our right. We then march again north-west, to proceed soon due north. We are on the declivity of the mountain of Karak; and we wind, to our left, along a deep ravine called the Ouad-el-Medabeh, with a rivulet running at the bottom. Our descent is rapid. By twelve exactly we are opposite some projecting rocks on the mountain side; under these is concealed a spring, called Aÿn-Teheddah. By three minutes past twelve we

descend to within six yards of the bottom of the ouad, which now takes the name of Ouad-el-Goulleh.

The bed of the rivulet is full of rose-laurel bushes, and by five minutes past twelve we cross it, in the middle of small cultivated plains, planted with olive-trees. By nine minutes past twelve the ouad narrows again, so as to become only twenty yards wide, and we are opposite to some masses of rock on our left, which have fallen down from the mountain. To our right, on the opposite flank—and on the other side of the rivulet, the bed of which is very deep and narrow at this spot, with a fine rich vegetation along its banks—we descry a small ruined Mussulman building, close to a fountain called Aÿn-Sara. This fountain is sufficiently abundant to turn a small mill, situated some yards lower down. It is true, a second spring, called Aÿn-Obech, or Aqbech (the Arabs of Karak pronounce this name both ways), also contributes its waters to the mill. Beyond, a valley opens, fifty yards distant to our right. This is the Ouad-Belastamah, on the western flank of which, a village is pointed out, called Daouarat-el-Habs.

Our road is still through the Ouad-el-Karak, running here in a north-westerly direction, and we pass on the left a hillock, having its declivity planted with olive-trees. As soon as we have passed the head of the Ouad-Belastamah, the Ouad-el-Karak turns with our road due west, widening to a breadth of two hundred yards, so as to form a small plain, with a mill at the bottom. By sixteen minutes past twelve we are opposite this mill; we then leave the bottom of the ouad, to ascend a small cultivated eminence, bounded by rocks, commanding the bed of the ravine. We are now marching west-south-west. By twenty-one minutes past

twelve we are at a considerable distance from the Ouad-el-Karak, and in front of a small, low plain, in the centre of which is a fountain, called Aÿn-el-Bessas, situated about forty yards to the right of our road. From this spot the road inclines slightly upwards, and in a west-north-west direction. By twenty-six minutes past twelve the bottom of the Ouad-el-Karak, running due west, is two hundred yards distant to our right, whilst the cliffs bordering the valley on our side begin only one hundred yards off to our left.

We have then distinctly in sight, beyond the Ouad-el-Karak, a high mountain, on the summit of which is the tomb, called Qoubbet-Habisieh, of a Mussulman saint; and also the ruins of a Christian monastery, named at the present day, Dier-el-Mokharib. By thirty-eight minutes past twelve our road, after having made an elbow to the south, resumes a westerly direction, and we are opposite some perpendicular rocks bordering the opposite side of the Ouad-el-Karak. These rocks have received from the Arabs the name of El-Khaouadjat (the merchants), but none of our Bedouins can furnish me with the reason of this extraordinary designation.

By forty-three minutes past twelve we arrive at the bed of a rivulet, planted with rose-laurel bushes. This rivulet is formed by a spring called Aÿn-Sahour. The Ouad-el-Karak here takes a westerly direction, as does our road, and four hundred yards distant to the right. By fifty-one minutes past twelve we turn off a little, marching west-north-west. We are then on the side of a hill, forming, in some sort, the foot of a high mountain, the summit of which, distant about four thousand yards on our left, is named Ras-el-Emguer. By fifty-five minutes

past twelve we have reached the bottom of a small ravine, covered with another fine thicket of rose-laurel bushes. By fifty-eight minutes past twelve, at the very spot where we fall in with a fountain called the Aÿn-el-Thabib, our road takes a slight turn, inclining exactly north-west. At one o'clock we reach another spring, the Aÿn-el-Sekkeh, situated at the foot of a rising ground, on an agreeable grass-plot. We halt here for a few minutes, to water our horses. The bed of the Ouad-el-Karak is then eight hundred or a thousand yards distant to our right. We march north-north-west until nearly half-past one, when we perceive, at a distance of twenty-five yards to our left, a second spring, also called Aÿn-el-Sekkeh.

On the flank of the mountain, opposite the declivity along which we are marching, we descry a verdant ravine, with a spring named the Aÿn-Zeboub. By twenty-six minutes past one the valley inclines a little to the south, and our course lies west by north. We are then on a small eminence, on which a single tree is planted. By half-past one we pass in front of, and at the distance of thirty yards from, a ruin called Omm-Sedereh. We now discover, for the first time in this direction, well-marked vestiges of an ancient paved road. To our left, on the height, at the distance of half an hour's march, according to the statement of some Karak Arabs who have joined our caravan, is the Belad-el-Ahzar. At forty minutes past one we are marching north-west, and are exactly in front of the Aÿn-Zeboub, already mentioned, from which we are divided by an interval of nearly three thousand yards.

We keep advancing along the side of the mountain forming the southern border of the Ouad-el-Karak, and

proceed by a ridge commanding a level eminence, situated about fifty yards below our path. On this lower ledge, and at about fifty yards' distance, as the crow flies, are springs situated amongst rocks, and called Aÿoun-el-Rhezal. Immediately after we begin the descent towards this ledge, marching west by north. The bed of the Ouad-el-Karak has now drawn closer to us, and we are only four hundred yards distant from it. Until two o'clock we follow a path cut perpendicularly upon rocks, commanding, from a height of ten yards, the lower ledge, upon which are found the Aÿoun-el-Rhezal (the Springs of the Antelopes).

By eight minutes past two we are on the crest of a small deeply-hollowed valley, coming from the south, and at the bottom of which is a spring called Aÿn-er-Recès. Some winding paths, difficult to follow, take us, by a quarter-past two, to the bottom of this valley, close to the fountain. The Ouad-el-Karak is then six hundred yards distant to our right. On our arrival here, our el-Karak Christians propose to us to halt and pitch our tents for the night. But this advice is very roughly received ; we have retained too keen a remembrance of the inhabitants of the inhospitable town we have just left, not to deem it the highest degree of folly to encamp so close to its walls. We are still far from the tents of the Beni-Sakhars ; Mohammed-el-Midjielly might very easily change his mind, and fall upon us during the night with his banditti. I therefore negative this proposition in the most decided terms greatly to the disgust of our moukris, and issue positive orders to continue the march, signifying that I am determined to sleep to-night beyond the mountains and within

the Rhôr. Nobody dares to offer remonstrances which evidently would be ill-received, and we push on.

After winding through the bottom of the valley along the foot of the height, we resume, by twenty-one minutes past two, our north-westerly direction. The Ouad-el-Karak is still drawing closer to us, and is now only four hundred yards distant to our right. We then proceed along a cornice, not more than ten yards wide, commanding the inferior ledge. At this spot we have, nine hundred yards off, to our left, the summit of the Djebel-el-Hadits ; and at nearly twelve miles to our right that of the Djebel-Dzâfel. We soon descend between the rocks to the lower platform, and find ourselves, by thirty-five minutes past two, in the midst of a vast agglomeration of huge blocks that have been rent from the mountain by an earthquake, and rolled down into the valley. From thirty-five to forty-two minutes past two we are moving through this chaos ; and the bed of the ouad has drawn a hundred yards closer to us.

By forty-four minutes past two we enter, through the fallen rocks, another steep and winding descent, called the Naqb-el-Mouchinaneh. At forty-seven minutes past two we cross a ravine encumbered with enormous rocks, beyond which this strange chaos still extends, — the actual fragments of a mountain shattered into pieces by a terrible convulsion of nature. At fifty-nine minutes past two we arrive at a small circular plain, not more than one hundred yards in diameter, and pass close by the left flank of a rocky conical hill of considerable elevation. The termination of the Ouad-el-Karak is three hundred yards distant to our right. By five minutes past three we descend again between the rocks. We

have now gained the bottom of a steep ravine, which we reach by twenty minutes past three, and take our course along it west-south-west. The right bank of this ravine is formed by a projecting hillock of considerable size, on the western point of which are the ruins of an ancient tower, called Redjom-Talâa. At the end of the ravine, opposite this tower, we find, by twenty-four minutes past three, a small spring. This is Aÿn-Talâa. (Talâa means any place by which the waters are carried down from the heights into the plain.)

By half-past three we are on the flank of another conical hill, situated to our left, and reach the foot of it by two or three very steep winding paths. This conical hill commands a ravine containing another spring, called the Aÿn-el-Mantarah. At length, by thirty-five minutes past three, we are before the entrance of a fearful chasm, being in reality an enormous crater. This is called the Ouad-el-Kharazeh, or rather el-Kharadjeh (the valley of the issue). On the upper ledge is a square ruin, called Kabou-el-Kharazeh. By forty-two minutes past three we proceed, by short turns, through this repulsive defile, commanded on the left by a long black mountain, and on the right by immense calcareous cliffs. At the foot of these we descry many level protrusions of lava, near enough (about fifty yards distant from us), to enable us to ascertain that they are not large black spots of vegetable earth.

By fifty-five minutes past three we are on a rocky neck of land, commanding the bottom of the valley, and scarcely forty yards broad. Its extremity bears the ruins of three towers, two of them round, and the third square, only ten yards distant from each other, with the road

passing between them. A number of dwarf palm-trees cover the right flank of this species of promontory, which we leave, to descend to the bottom of the ouad, by passing over the side of the black mountain.

As our progress is extremely difficult, we halt for five minutes, at four o'clock, to give a little breathing time both to ourselves and to our horses. By eleven minutes past four we are marching due-west, after having at first inclined a little southward. We then leave the flank of the black mountain, and find ourselves again amongst the white hillocks, after having passed other levelled heaps of lava, the surface of which seems to have gone through the same process of decomposition as the Vesuvian lavas at Torre-del-Greco. We follow a ravine running west-south-west between the white hills, and ending in a small flat ledge, upon which we halt by twenty minutes past four. Since fourteen minutes past four the sandy hillocks have assumed a red tint, and their sides are strewed with rolled pebbles. To our left, following a direction parallel to that of our road, is another ravine full of dwarf palm-trees and rose-laurels, with a pleasant rivulet bubbling along the bottom. This is the Nahr-ed-Drâa, which we encountered some days since in the Rhôr.

It would be difficult to find a more eligible spot for a resting-place than that at which we have just arrived. Besides, it is getting late, and night advances rapidly. We have close by an abundant supply of delicious water. Our camp is soon pitched, and now we feel quite sure that the brigands of Karak cannot attack us during the darkness. We are beyond their reach, and too close to the encampment of our friends, the Beni-Sakhars, for the Karakese to attempt anything of the kind.

The weather has become misty, and threatens rain. I am anxious, whilst our tents are being pitched, to make some researches in natural history round the camp ; but darkness is coming on apace, and I am obliged to postpone my scientific labours until to-morrow morning. We soon discover that, in our march from Karak to this place, we have reached a much lower level. Instead of the frozen temperature of that inhospitable town, we find the genial heat of the shores of the Dead Sea. We mark with regret that heavy clouds are rolling above our heads, as it is evident they are charged with mischief. We reflect with some anxiety upon the Sabkhah, which we shall have to cross in two days hence, and which might cause us much misfortune were the sudden rains to overflow the fords. But, no matter, here we are, safe and sound, out of the clutches of Mohammed-el-Midjielly ; and, for the moment, let us be happy in that reflection—there will be time enough to disturb our thoughts with the dangers and difficulties of the Sabkhah.

Whilst our moukris are pitching the tents, the Scheikh Abd-Allah informs me that the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh, through which we have just been marching, was the scene of a terrible disaster to the army of Ibrahim Pacha, at the time of his first attempt against Karak. According to the narrator, the whole of the expeditionary corps perished in this cut-throat pass ; but I make, *in petto*, the necessary allowance for Arabian exaggeration ; and conclude, that the battle that took place in the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh was much less important than the inhabitants of Karak choose to assert. One thing is certain, that Ibrahim Pacha was completely foiled in his first attempt to get possession of that place ; and that the Egyptians,

crushed in the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh, were obliged to retreat. But they obtained their revenge shortly after. The pass was forced, and the town, carried by storm, completely ruined. It is easy still to judge of the devastation inflicted on this haunt of robbers by the victorious soldiers of Ibrahim.

After dinner, the evening's work was got through as speedily as possible, and we all retired to rest in high spirits, reflecting with gratitude on the danger from which we had just escaped. Scheikh Hamdan's face has also, since we have reached the banks of the Nahr-ed-Drâa, resumed something of its usual serenity. The faithful protector finds his responsibility already growing lighter.

CHAPTER XI.

A wet night under canvass—Consequences of the bite of a scorpion—The march resumed—Plains and ravines—Continued succession of extensive ruins—More volcanic evidences—Ruins of Zeboiim—The Land of Moab—Scriptural references and authorities—Table of localities and ruins identified—Situation of Sodom—Zoar, and the Salt Mountain—Remains of the condemned cities—Enumeration of illustrative passages from the sacred writings.

January 21st.

We have not been deceived in our expectations; towards nine o'clock in the evening the rain began to fall, and continued during a considerable portion of the night. This morning the weather is still dark and misty; but above the Rhôr the clouds are divided, and not very threatening. We hope to leave the rain behind us as soon as we shall have arrived on the shore of the Dead Sea.

Whilst they are striking our tents, I go down to the bank of the rivulet, and pick up some rocks, plants, and molluscas which the damp weather has enticed from their hiding-places. A helix of a whitish colour, with a puckered mouth (*Helix Boissieri*), is found very abundantly. The animal is of a greenish yellow, and has a strong smell of garlic, owing perhaps to its feeding exclusively upon some vegetable of the alliaceous family.

When I ascend again, with the produce of my excursion, to the ledge where we have passed the night, I find

that one of our moukris has just been stung in the left hand by a large yellow scorpion, which had been driven out by the rain from its usual hiding-place, and had taken refuge under the canvass of our tent, at the place where the awning hangs over the walls. The poor fellow is sadly frightened; and I confess that I do not feel very confident as to the consequences of this unfortunate occurrence. Not a minute is to be lost, and we must try something to cure the sufferer, or he will encounter the risk of dying from the effects of the sting. I tell him to divide the flesh with his own khandjar, at the exact place where he has been stung. I then take from our little travelling medicine-chest a bottle of spirits of hartshorn. As the wounded man is rather awkward in operating upon himself, one of his comrades acts as a surgeon, and with great composure makes a splendid cut into the wound. I then saturate it with the hartshorn, which sets the patient grinning as if he were going mad; and, to restore his courage, I give him a few drops to drink in half a glass of water. I knew that such was the remedy against the bite of a viper, and I thought I could do no better than apply the same to the sting of a scorpion. The supposition proved correct, for the wounded man was relieved from pain in a moment, and escaped the threatened danger, with no other mischief than a slight incision, which will very soon be healed.

After the usual delay, our luggage is ready and loaded, and the moment of departure has arrived, to our unanimous satisfaction. We are also now to take leave of the Christian Arabs of Karak. I present a bakhshish of five hundred piastres to Scheikh Abd-Allah, twenty piastres and a kafieh to each of his men; we exchange

embraces most affectionately, and part. Whilst they are tracing back their way up the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh, we proceed exactly in the opposite direction.

This morning I had a long conversation with the Scheikh Abd-Allah as to the possibility of carrying off the Moabitic bas-relief of the Redjom-el-Aabed. He undertakes, being himself a stonecutter by trade, to reduce the *stélon*, by removing from the back, the thickness that merely adds a useless weight; and when he has done this, he proposes to load it on a camel, and carry it himself to the French consulate at Jerusalem; there he will immediately receive a sum of twelve hundred piastres, for which amount I hand him a bill upon our consul. Unfortunately, I have been stupid enough to write it only in French, and this is probably the sole reason why this precious monument has not yet been forwarded to me. More than eighteen months have now elapsed since this agreement was made between Abd-Allah and myself, and he certainly would have already remitted the stone to Jerusalem, had he been more certain of the payment of the promised sum. However, it is also possible that unexpected obstacles may have prevented him from fulfilling his contract. Who knows if the Bedouins, precisely on account of the value which I was silly enough to attach, in their presence, to this unrivalled monument, have not been seized with the frenzy of pounding it into dust, to extract therefrom the imaginary gold which my joy on discovering the stone may have naturally led them to suppose was concealed within it? This would be a real loss to archæology. I consider myself very fortunate now in having the faithful sketch we have now brought off, and

which I thought nothing of as long as the bas-relief itself was under my eyes.

It is fully thirty-three minutes past eight o'clock when we commence our march, the direction of our route being west-south-west. The whole caravan descends with great difficulty into the bed of the Nahr-ed-Drâa, which is only fifty yards distant from the spot where we have encamped. The direction of the Ouad-ed-Drâa is at first east-north-east ; but it soon makes an abrupt elbow, and turns westward, as also does the road we now intend to follow.

Here an obstinate mule, determined to have its own way, receives a terrible fall, and rolls down to the bottom of the rivulet, getting entangled amongst the dwarf palm-trees and rose-laurels. We find it no easy job to haul her up again, and this untoward accident makes us lose ten good minutes. At forty-four minutes past eight I was apprised of the necessity of waiting until this disaster is repaired, and it is only by fifty-five minutes past eight that we can resume our march. We have halted upon a ledge tolerably well planted with gum-trees, by the side of a small eminence only a few yards high, above which another platform extends in the direction of the black mountain, which is here distant about eight hundred yards.

The bottom of the northern gulf, formed by the peninsula, shows itself to us again, and somewhat more to the south than the spot where we have stopped. By fifty-seven minutes past eight we are scarcely twenty yards distant from the summit of the little eminence we have just been rounding ; and the two ledges which it divided, both planted with acacias, unite immediately to

form a small plain, covered with ruins, and called Talâa-Seimâan or Sebâan. This plain soon sinks to a lower level, and forms a second shelf, likewise covered with ruins and planted with gum-trees; our course through it lies south-west. The ruins speedily disappear. By nine minutes past nine we turn our backs upon the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh, and wind along a hillock situated on our right.

By eleven minutes past nine we have rounded the western spur of the hillock, and march directly south-west, through a plain covered with gum-trees, and inclining downwards towards the Dead Sea. Here some very considerable ruins begin again to show themselves. By fourteen minutes past nine we cross a ravine, the southern bank of which is edged by an ancient wall; beyond the ravine, to the right and left, extensive ruins are spreading, as far as the eye can reach, and named by the Arabs Kharbat-ed-Drâa. The foundation of a wall, built of large hewn stones, crosses the road we are following; and, a little further on, we come up to a rivulet, running directly from east to west. This rivulet seems to issue from a cleft in the mountain, called the Ouad-es-Seibâa (the valley of the lions), which, from this distance, closely resembles a crater. It lies about fifteen hundred yards off to our left.

As soon as we have crossed the rivulet, by twenty minutes past nine, we march directly west along its bank, and take our course almost immediately south-west. Some minutes after, the ledge descends again abruptly to another shelf; and by five-and-twenty minutes past nine we cross a dry water-course. To our left is a round hillock, upon which more ruins appear. By twenty-six minutes past

nine we pass another ravine, with a rocky bottom, beyond which a plain opens, covered with rubbish. Amongst the heaps we descry, first, a large circular ruin, situated to the left of the road. An interval of fifty yards divides it from another ruin, looking southward, and which is itself separated, by a distance of about a hundred yards, from a third ruin of the same description. A fourth ruin is situated one hundred yards westward of the first.

The mountains are at least two thousand yards distant on our left, and their foot is strewed with sandy hillocks, beginning at about fifteen hundred yards from our road. By thirty-six minutes past nine we have turned south-west, moving along sandy hillocks, situated some hundred yards off to our right. To our left is a hill with ruins, and a ravine at its foot. This ravine intersects our road. By forty minutes past nine it forms the limit of the extensive ruins we have for some time been passing through. Beyond appears the range of sandy hillocks, which may almost be mistaken for heaps of ashes. We keep on advancing through this, and soon after the road sweeps round a neck of land between two defiles. By forty-five minutes past nine this neck is forty yards broad, but it narrows rapidly ; and by forty-nine minutes past nine it is only eight or ten yards broad at the utmost. By a quarter to ten we are in front of the northern extremity of a dark-coloured mountain, much dislocated, behind which is another extensive crater, which it conceals. Our road then lies westward by south.

Here again appear numerous streaks of small brown calcined stones, forming oblong spots turned towards the crater of the Ouad-es-Seibâa. By fifty minutes past nine we find, twenty yards off to our right, a hillock, beyond

which we discover, at a further distance of about a hundred yards, another crater, with its sides deeply rent and furrowed, and the strata of which it is composed visibly uplifted and thrown promiscuously in all directions.

By exactly ten o'clock we halt on this side of the ravine, which we have been flanking on our left for the last quarter of an hour, and which crosses our road at this point. We hasten to despatch our abstemious breakfast, and mount our horses again. By twenty-two minutes past ten we resume our march, crossing the ravine before us. Beyond it, the whole ground is covered with grey sandy hillocks, through which we thread our way. On the largest of these hillocks, being the first we cross on our left, immediately after having passed the ravine, is a very distinguishable ruin. We thence march south-south-west. By thirty-five minutes past ten we cross the bed of another ravine, which forms the continuation of our road. By thirty-nine minutes past ten we incline a little westward; and at length, at forty minutes past ten, emerge from the sandy hillocks, issuing upon a plain, covered with acacias, which we immediately recognise. We are here precisely opposite the southern flank of the peninsula.

By forty-seven minutes past ten we march due south through thickets, until we reach a small sandy plain; and by exactly eleven o'clock we find ourselves once more on the site where, on the 14th instant (January), the second encampment of the Beni-Sakhars was established, and in the midst of which we had pitched our own tents. It is now a naked spot; everything in the Rhôr—reeds and bushes included—has been devoured by the cattle; and the Beni-Sakhars have sought another dwelling-place. We follow their example, and continue marching on by the

same road on which we travelled before, and in the direction of the first encampment of January 13th.

As soon as we have reached the Rhôr-Safieh, we keep closer inland, towards the mountain, than we did on our first passage through the country; and, instead of proceeding to halt at the same spot where we had pitched our tents before, we establish ourselves close to a Bedouin encampment, which we had then only observed from a distance. This encampment lies seven hundred yards east-north-east from the first. On reaching the place, I discover, six hundred yards off, to the north-east from the spot where we halt, additional and considerable ruins; I immediately inquire their name, but they have none. The Bedouins only recognise them as the ruins of habitations of the olden time. Their knowledge extends to no particulars.

At last we have arrived in a friendly country. Nothing now remains but to clear the Sabkhah, and, that done, we shall have bravely accomplished the important task we had undertaken.

To-day, for the first time, Papigny has brought down one of the beautiful little humming-birds, fluttering amongst the acacias. I consider this an acquisition too valuable not to take possession of it. I make the claim unhesitatingly in the name of science, and the prize is given up by general consent. Papigny, despoiled of his conquest, is now intent on procuring another, to replace the treasure I have taken from him; the consequence is, that, during the whole march, he has been running on the flanks of the caravan, pursuing these little birds from tree to tree, without obtaining a successful shot. His sporting frenzy seems to annoy our worthy Scheikhs, who have

cautioned me several times that it is exceedingly imprudent to stray in this manner from the main body of the caravan. Although I am sufficiently inclined to believe in real dangers, still, I have some doubts that the objections of our Arabs may also be partly produced by the forced delays which these irregular excursions entail on our general progress. When on the march, the sole object of an Arab is to reach the encamping ground as soon as possible, and he cannot understand why any one should lose a minute in running after a little bird, gathering a flower, and picking up an insect or a pebble. In his opinion, the man who squanders his time after this fashion, is either a *hakim* or a *meidjnoun*, a sage (meaning a physician) or a fool.

It appears that the rain by which we were caught last night at the encampment of the Nahr-ed-Drâa, has proved exceedingly disagreeable to the scorpions,—turning them out of their usual hiding-places; the poor creatures are driven to seek for refuge anywhere; and on unpacking our camp cots, to arrange them in our tents, our people find a number of them, most likely much annoyed at being disturbed again. To-night we purpose a narrow inspection of our beds, before we venture to lay down.

Throughout the day we have passed considerable ruins, situated within a short distance of enormous craters. To what ancient town do they belong? At present I find it very difficult to guess. As I am always looking for Gomorrah, I imagine at first that the ruins we have just visited are those of that city, and the significant name of Sebâan scarcely suffices to open my eyes. I have already said, when speaking of En-Nemaïreh, that it was only at a later period that I recognised in this place Zeboiim

when, without any possible doubt, I had found Gomorrah towards the northern point of the Dead Sea.

Our evening has been occupied in naming and arranging plants, insects, and pebbles picked up in great quantities in the Rhôr-Safieh, and in laying down my map with Indian ink. We have paid our Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs the balance we owed them; but we by no means deceive ourselves, and are quite sure that to-morrow morning they will ask us for an additional bakhshish.

Now that their purses are well replenished, the Scheikhs have but one thought, that of purchasing arms. Matteo carries a wide-mouthed pistol, of an extraordinary shape, and Samet-Aly is longing to become the happy possessor of this weapon. He plagues Matteo throughout the whole of the evening to induce him to part with it. As soon as I hear of this negotiation, I warn Matteo that I will myself purchase his pistol, but that the Scheikh must not be told of it. The pistol is downright lumber, and I pay a hundred piastres for it; but, no matter, to-morrow I shall make my man the happiest and proudest of Scheikhs.

This evening the weather has become particularly cloudy, and the rain begins to fall almost immediately after sunset. During the first hours, and until the canvas of our tents had become sufficiently saturated to swell, and throw the water off on the exterior surface, we were drenched in the most disagreeable manner. But we wrapped ourselves closely under our blankets, and fell fast asleep, leaving the storm to take its natural course.

January 22nd.

The night has been a dreadful one: squalls of rain have followed each other in constant succession, often disturbing our repose, and keeping us awake with anxious

anticipations of the Sabkhah, which we must cross as soon as possible, unless we choose to be detained, during perhaps a whole month, in the Rhôr-Safieh.

Now that we have traversed the land of Moab in its full extent, let us pause a moment to identify, if possible, the modern names of the ruins, the position of which we have determined on our route, with the names transmitted to us by the sacred and profane writers of antiquity ; but, in the first place, let us recapitulate, in the shortest possible summary, the history of the original inhabitants.

We learn from Genesis (xix. 37) that Moab was born of the incest that took place between Lot and his eldest daughter. After the catastrophe of the Pentapolis, the Moabites, his descendants, obtained possession of the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, and the vast extent of elevated country by which it is commanded, expelling from thence the Emims ; for we read in the Bible :*— 9. "And the Lord said unto me : Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle, for I will not give thee of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession." 10. "The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakims ;" 11. "Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims, but the Moabites call them Emims." It may be conjectured that these two verses, 10 and 11, as well as the 12th, are but a marginal comment (posterior to the Book of Moses itself), which has become interpolated with the sacred text ; for these three verses, mentioning the Judaïc conquest as if it were already achieved, contravene the command given by the Almighty to Moses. At all events, it appears certain that

* Deuteronomy, ii.

the Emims, original inhabitants of the country, were expelled, and succeeded by the race descended from Lot and his son Moab.

The Ammonites, brothers of the Moabites through Ammon, son of Lot, and his younger daughter, established themselves likewise on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea and of the Jordan, but more to the eastward than the Moabites. These last, after having spread their dominion as far as the banks of the Yabbok, opposite Jericho, were driven back by the Ammonites beyond the Arnon (Ouad-el-Moudjeb), which became the northern limit of the Moabitic country. Such it was already, when the Israelites, coming from Egypt, arrived on its frontiers. We read accordingly in Numbers (xxi): 13. "From thence they (the Israelites) removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites, for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites." 14. "Wherefore it is said, in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea and in the brooks of Arnon."

This second verse, as translated, is unintelligible. What does the Hebrew word *ouahab* mean? No one can tell. In Arabic, وكب (ouahab) means to give, to grant, to concede. Perhaps this verse ought to be rendered thus: —"Wherefore it is said, in the book of the wars of the Lord, *what he granted* in the Red Sea and in the brooks of the Arnon." The object of the verse being then to determine the limits of the land given to the children of Moab, which land began at a place called *Soufah* (the Red Sea), and ended at the Arnon. Of course, I do not mean to assume that this explanation is incontrovertible;

I shall only observe that if, in the name *Soufah*, we were to recognise a place in the neighbourhood of the Djebel-es-*Soufah*, which mountain is actually lying to the south of the Ouad-ez-Zouera, and to the south-west of the Djebel-el-Melehh, the verse just quoted would then give correctly the southern and northern limits of the country, properly called the land of the Moabites; for Zouera, or Zoar, was positively within that boundary. This is clearly demonstrated by the commentary of St. Jerome,* in which we read this passage: *Segor in finibus Moabitarum sita est, dividens ab iis terram Philistiim.*

But let us leave as quickly as we can this dangerous ground of surmises and hypotheses, merely observing, however, that the tenor of the following verse, 15th, "*And at the stream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab,*" seems to complete the entire boundary of the land of Moab, by defining its eastern frontier.

The progress of the Israelites towards the confines of Moab, is perfectly laid down and described in the Book of Judges (xi. 17, 18): "And in like manner they (Israel) sent unto the King of Moab, but he would not consent, and Israel abode in Kadesh (to the south of the country of Canaan)." "18. And they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab, for Arnon was the border of Moab." From this verse, compared with those I have just quoted, it appears that the valley of the Arnon, after having covered the northern boundary of the

* Ad. Jes. xv.

Moabitic country, inclined in to the southward, so as to cover likewise its eastern frontier. This is precisely the case with the Ouad-el-Moudjeb, the identity of which with the valley of the Arnon is universally admitted.

I have stated that, according to the Book of Numbers, when the Israelites first made their appearance, the Arnon divided the country of the Moabites from that of the Amorites. This was owing to the circumstance, that all the country to the northward, between the Arnon and the Yabbok, had been taken by the Amorites from the Moabites, previously to the arrival of Moses on the banks of the Arnon. This conquest was of very recent occurrence, for we read in Numbers (xxi. 26) : "For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, the King of the Amorites, who had fought against the former King of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon."

According to the Hebraïc text, this expedition of Sihon extended to Ar, the capital of the Moabites :* but the Samaritan text, and the Greek version of the Septuagint, both alike read *Arnon* instead of *Ar*, and so it becomes probable that the Amorite conquest stopped at the banks of the Arnon. Be that as it may, Sihon, King of Heshbon, having refused the Israelites a passage through the country situated between the Arnon and the Yabbok, was fiercely attacked, and beaten by them at Jahaz ;† after which his towns were sacked, and all their inhabitants, men, women, and children, put to the sword.‡

The King of Moab was then Balak, the son of Zippor ; he it was who, not daring to oppose in arms the passage of the Israelites, sent for Balâam to curse them—a

* Numbers, xxi. 28. † Deuteronomy, ii. 32.
‡ Deuteronomy, ii. 34.

proceeding which turned out to his own confusion. In this miraculous recital,* a town is mentioned by the name of Kirjath-huzoth (xxii. 39), as being the place from which the first blessing of Balâam was sent forth. Was it a town of Moab, properly so called ? This appears doubtful; for the second and third spots to which Balak led Balâam, in the hope that from thence he might send forth against Israel imprecations instead of blessings, are, in the first instance, the summit of Mount Fesgah (the Pisgah of the translators ;†) and next, the summit of Mount Fâour (the Peor or Phegor of the translators)—mountains that are positively situated beyond the true limits of the Moabitic country.

We then lose sight of the Moabites up to the period when, a little more than half a century after the death of Joshua, this people, with the assistance of the Ammonites and of the Amalekites, succeeded in subduing the Israelites, who remained eighteen years under the dominion of Adjloun (the Eglon of the translators), King of Moab. At the end of these eighteen years, Ahouad-ben-Djera‡ (the Ehud, son of Gera, of the translators), murdered King Adjloun in the town of the Palm-trees (Jericho ?), having come from the stone-quarries in the neighbourhood of Hedjeljal (Gilgal), to solicit a private audience from the prince.§

Ahouad, having succeeded in murdering the king, contrived to escape by the stone-quarries in the direction of Seirath, assembled the Hebrews on the mountains of Ephraim, rushed down into the plain, where he obtained

* Numbers, xxi. xxiii. † Numbers, xxiii. 14.

‡ This name, Ahouad, is still very common among the Arabs. We may mention, as an instance, the nephew of Hamdan, Scheikh of the Thâameras.

§ Judges, iii. 19, and following.

possession of the fords of the Jordan, and, the retreat of the Moabites being thus cut off, he slaughtered ten thousand of them.

In the days of Saul, the Moabites appear again amongst the nations at war with the Hebrews,—for we read:* "Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies, on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the Kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them."

At a still later period, David subdued and compelled them to pay him tribute:† "And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts." This verse means probably that, amongst the Moabitic prisoners, all those whose size exceeded the interval between two ropes stretched along the ground, and between which they were compelled to lay down at their length, were put to death; whilst all those whose size was found below the mark were spared, and allowed to live.

After the death of Solomon, and when the revolt of the ten tribes had taken place, the Moabites became tributaries to the Kings of Israel; for we read:—"Moab‡ rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab." The King of Moab's name was then Mesha, and the annual tribute which he had to pay was "one hundred thousand lambs, and one hundred thousand rams with the wool."

Jehoram,§ having succeeded his father Ahab on the

* 1 Samuel, xiv. 47.
† 2 Samuel, viii. 2.
‡ 2 Kings, i. 1.
§ 2 Kings, iii. 1.

throne of Samaria, hastened to invite Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, to assist him in an expedition against the Moabites. The two monarchs planned together to attack their common enemy by passing through the Desert of Edom,* the king of that country having also formed an alliance with them. The scarcity of water, after seven days' march, was near causing the destruction of the allied armies; but the prophet Elisha came to their assistance; the valleys were filled with water from Heaven; and the Moabites, having imprudently exposed themselves to an attack, were overthrown, and mercilessly slaughtered; their cities were destroyed, the cultivated lands covered with stones, the cisterns choked up, the trees cut down; and the siege of Kir-Kerasat (Kir-haraseth) commenced with slings.

The King of Moab, at the head of seven hundred men, made a sortie in the direction of the camp of the Edomites, but was repulsed. In this extremity, he conceived the horrible idea of offering his eldest son as a sacrifice on the wall of the town. The Moabites then, seized with horror, redoubled their exertions against the assailants, and compelled them to retire.†

This interpretation of the two verses just quoted, is not the only apparent one, or rather I should say, not the one most likely to be correct. The text will permit us to suppose that the King of Moab, having failed in his sally to seize the person of the King of Edom, succeeded in capturing his eldest son, whom he offered as a burnt-offering to his gods, on the walls of Kir-haraseth. This version, which is not new, has the additional advantage of explaining a remarkable passage of the prophet Amos

* 2 Kings, iii. 8. † 2 Kings, iii. 26, 27.

(ii. 1) : "Thus saith the Lord ; for three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof : because he burned the bones of the King of Edom into lime." "2. But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of Kirioth : and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet." "3. And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the Lord." It would be difficult not to recognise the same fact in the verse of the Book of Kings, and in that of Amos.

The Book of Chronicles* gives us a detailed narrative of an expedition of the Moabites against Jehoshaphat, King of Judah. The Ammonites were then marching with the Moabites : . . . "2. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee, from beyond the sea (evidently the Dead Sea), on this side Syria, from Aram (most likely the text is not properly spelt, and it ought to be read Edom instead of Aram) ; and behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi." "3. And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." His prayer was heard. Jahaziel, seized with the prophetic spirit, predicted that Judah would not have to struggle with the approaching foe, and that God himself would fight the battle : "16. To-morrow, go ye down against them ; behold, they are come up by the cliff of Ziz ; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel." As the prophet had foretold, a spirit of madness came upon the invading army; the Moabites and Ammonites

* 2 Chronicles, xx. 2, 3, 16.

fell upon the Idumeans of the mountain of Seir, and destroyed them; then they turned their arms against themselves, and destroyed each other. During three days the subjects of Jehoshaphat were occupied in despoiling the dead. On the fourth day they assembled in a chosen valley, to return thanks to the Lord; and this valley was called ever after *the valley of the blessing.* This event resulted from the expedition of the Kings of Israel and Judah against the Moabites. When these princes were compelled to retreat, it seems more than probable that King Mesha, after having been the assailed, became the assailant.

We read again, in the Book of Kings:* "And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year." Joash was then King of Israel, and the country mentioned in the verse just quoted was the kingdom over which he reigned.

When the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, had been driven away into captivity by Pul and Tilgath-Pilneser,† Kings of Assyria, the country lying between the Arnon and the Yabbok was, it seems, again taken possession of by the Moabites; for Isaiah and Jeremiah, prophecying against the race of Moab, mention, as towns belonging to this people, some that were most certainly situated within the country conquered from the Ammonites by the Hebrews.

A very long time after, the Moabites appear again in the army of Nebuchadnezzar, as the allies of the Chaldeans. So we read in 2 Kings (xxiv. 2): "And the Lord sent against him (that is to say, against Jehoiakim,

* 2 Kings, xiii. 20. † 1 Chronicles, v. 26.

King of Judah) bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets."

Josephus informs us * that this alliance of the Chaldeans with the Moabites was of no long duration; for, in the fifth year after the sack of Jerusalem, being the twenty-third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, this monarch invaded Syria; after having conquered it, he assailed the Ammonites and the Moabites, whom he also subdued, and then marched against Egypt. This is most likely the expedition which had been announced by the terrible prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah. The Moabites were then driven off into captivity, as had been foretold by these same prophecies.

In the Book of Daniel (xi. 41) we read: "He (the King of the North, Alexander the Great) shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown, but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." Profane history corroborates the fact, that the Macedonian conqueror did not disturb the Moabites.

Alexander Jannæus, if we follow Josephus (xiii. 3, 5), subdued the Moabites and the Galaadites, *who are Arabs* (according to the Jewish historian), and imposed tribute upon them; notwithstanding which, a short time after he suffered at their hands a signal defeat, from which he barely escaped with life. His adversaries were then the Arabs, who, under the guidance of their King Obeda, struggled during six years against the Jewish monarch,

* Ant. Jud., x. 3, 7.

and occasioned him a loss of fifty thousand men. This war, nevertheless, placed in the hands of Alexander Jannæus twelve towns, which he succeeded in conquering from these same Arabs. Josephus gives us the names of the towns * Medaba, Naballo, Livias, Tharabasa, Agalla, Athone, Zoara, Oronœ, Marissa, Rydda, Lausa, and Oryba. We shall have occasion presently to refer to this important evidence. It seems most probable that these are the events referred to in the prophecy of Zephaniah (ii. 9): "Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah: even the breeding of nettles, and salt pits and a perpetual desolation; the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them."

From thenceforth the name of the Moabites as an independent people disappears, and is lost in that of the Arab race, with whom the posterity of Moab becomes completely mixed up. The Roman conquests spread over the land of Moab during the perpetual struggles between the Arabs and the empire, and the Romans established themselves as victors at Rabbath-Moab, the capital, which became under their rule Areopolis. Kir-Kerasat received the name of Karak-Môba. When we notice especially the last-named city, we shall examine the leading events of which it was the theatre.

It remains only to extract certain passages from the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and we shall have collected together all the biblical documents, bearing reference to the country of the Moabites. Let us begin with Isaiah:—

Chapter xv. 1. "The burden of Moab. Because in the

* Ant. Jud. xiv. 2, 4.

night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste and brought to silence;

2. "He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off."

4. "And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: their voices shall be heard even unto Jahaz.

5. "My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, an heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up: for in the way of Horonaïm (the two caverns), they shall raise up a cry of destruction.

6. "For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

7. "Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows.

8. "For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-elim.

9. "For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood; for I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land."

Chapter xvi. 7. "Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken.

8. "For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof: they are come even unto Jazer:

they wandered through the wilderness : her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea.

9. "Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah : I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh : for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen."

11. "Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.

12. "And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray ; but he shall not prevail."

14. "But now the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude ; and the remnant shall be very small and feeble."

Jeremiah is still more precise when he prophesies the catastrophe impending over Moab ; but his words are often almost identical with those of Isaiah. Let us select the passages that appear most applicable :—

Chapter xlviii. 1. "Against Moab thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel : Woe unto Nebo ! for it is spoiled : Kiriathaim is confounded and taken : Misgab is confounded and dismayed.

2. "There shall be no more praise of Moab : in Heshbon they have devised evil against it ; come, and let us cut it off from being a nation. Also thou shalt be cut down, O madmen ; the sword shall pursue thee.

3. "A voice of crying shall be from Horonaim, spoiling, and great destruction.

4. "Moab is destroyed ; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

5. "For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping

shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaïm the enemies have heard a cry of destruction."

8. "And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken.

9. "Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein."

18. "Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strongholds.

19. "O inhabitant of Aroer, stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, and say, What is done?

20. "Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: howl and cry; tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is spoiled,

21. "And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath,

22. "And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

23. "And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon,

24. "And upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near."

31. "Therefore will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; my heart shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

32. "O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach even to the sea of Jazer."

34. "From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim, as an heifer of three years old; for the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate."

38. "There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the Lord."

41. "Kerioth is taken, and the strongholds are surprised.

42. "And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people."

45. "They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force: but a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones.

46. "Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken captives, and thy daughters captives.

47. "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord. Thus far is the judgment of Moab."

From the tenor of verses 45 and 47, it is plain that the Moabites were really led off into captivity, as I have previously stated.

Let us now turn from the inspired to the profane writers: Eusebius, on the word Δαμναβά (Damnaba), mentions a village of this name, situated eight miles from Areopolis; and another of the same designation as being seven miles from Heshbon, on mount Phegor. This word Damnaba is most likely incorrectly written, and ought

to be altered to Medeba. A town of the name of Medeba is mentioned as having fallen to the share of the tribe of Reuben, and must have been situated at its southern extremity, for Joshua (xiii. 16) places there the limit of the tribe. The passage is as follows: "And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba." We have already read at verse 9: "From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon." These two passages sufficiently prove that the Medeba therein mentioned was situated north of the Arnon, and in the territory of the Amorites; that is to say, between the Arnon and the Yabbok.

In Stephens's Ethnicals we read: "Medeba, a town of the Nabatheans. The inhabitants of this town call themselves Medebenians, according to Uranius in his second book of Arabicals." But whether this is the Medeba of the Moabites or the Amorites, I cannot take upon myself to decide. In either case, the text of Eusebius informs us that eight miles distant from Er-Rabba should be found the ruins of a Moabitic city, bearing exactly the same name as the city of Medeba, situated in the vicinity of Heshbon. Besides, Reland, among the twelve cities conquered by Alexander Jannæus from the Arabs, mentions Medeba, Zoar, and Coronaïm, as belonging to the (properly so called) land of Moab, and from thence he concludes that Agalla (the Agallaïm of Eusebius) was situated likewise with these three towns, south of the Arnon.

We have seen that Josephus enumerates Agalla*

* Ant. Jud. xiv. 2—4.

amongst the twelve cities conquered from the Arabs by Alexander Jannæus; Reland does not hesitate to identify this Αγαλλα with the Moabitic town named Eglaim by Isaiah (xv. 8). He is the more likely to be right in his opinion, as Eusebius asserts that in his own time there did exist a station called Αγαλλειμ, distant eight miles from Areopolis in a southerly direction.

Eusebius, at the word Λουειθ (Luhith), informs us that this locality, also mentioned in the Bible, was situated between Areopolis and Zoar. This means evidently that Luhith was on the high road, lying between these two extreme points; and since the sacred writings mention the *ascent to* Luhith, it is not possible to look for Luhith in any other than the mountainous portion of the road; that is to say, in the mountains that divide the high lands of Moab from the shores of the Dead Sea, or the Moabitic Rhôr.

And, lastly, St. Jerome, in his Commentary on Isaiah (xv.), informs us that Zoar belonged to the land of Moab: "Segor in finibus Moabitarum sita est, dividens ab eis terram Philistiim." The Bible accords with this statement of St. Jerome, for the people of Moab, deserting the banks of the Arnon, are described as flying as far as Zoar.

From the texts just quoted and examined, taking them altogether, it results that the Moabitic country was limited —to the northward by the Arnon; eastward, again, in all probability, by the valley of the Arnon making an elbow towards the south; and southward by a line passing through Zoar, and dividing the land of Moab from the country of the Philistines. Towards the southern frontier must have existed a station called Soufah. And, lastly, a road starting from Areopolis towards the southern limit

of the country, and more especially with the object of reaching the town of Zoar, passed by another station called Luhith.

I am ready to admit that the boundary of this southern frontier is not clearly defined, and that it is even vague and unfixed; but where neither the sacred nor profane authorities are fully explicit, we must consider ourselves fortunate when we can fix, with anything like certainty, a few simple land marks, even though inconsiderable in number.

Ptolemy, if the longitudes and latitudes he has laid down had been transmitted to us with any degree of accuracy, might greatly assist this inquiry; but, unfortunately, the geographical calculations attributed to him are so often mixed up with palpable mistakes, that we must be exceedingly cautious in making use of them. If we follow him in the respective bearings of the following towns:—Jerusalem, 66° and $31\frac{20}{3}°$; Engaddi $66\frac{1}{2}°$ and $31\frac{1}{4}°$; Thamara, $66\frac{1}{3}°$ and $30\frac{1}{2}\ \frac{1}{3}°$; Zoara, $67\frac{1}{3}°$ and $30\frac{1}{3}°$; Charakmoba, $66\frac{1}{6}°$ and 30°; Callirhoë, $67\frac{1}{1\frac{1}{2}}°$ and $31\frac{1}{6}°$; we shall find that the positions of Jerusalem, Engaddi, Thamara, and Callirhoë are nearly correct; whilst the figures assigned to Charakmoba and Zoara are quite inadmissible. For instance, Charakmoba should have been 67°, and Zoara 66° (leaving out the fractions, which I have no intention to correct), for otherwise Zoar would be laid down more to the eastward than Karak, a position which cannot be maintained.

The southern frontier, which I have assigned to the Moabitic country, was not always permanent, and the limitation of that region has been liable to change to the southward as well as to the northward. For instance, the Scriptures assign the Arnon as the northern limit of

the land of Moab at the period of the first arrival of the Israelites; and from the Prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, it clearly appears that the Moabites recovered possession of the country between the Arnon and Yabbok, after the captivity of the ten tribes. As to the southern frontier, in the days of St. Jerome, Zoar was on the border between the Moabitic country and the Holy Land (Palestine). Josephus considered it as an *Arabian* town; and in the sacred volume, this same Zoar, after having been named in Genesis amongst the towns of the condemned Pentapolis, became, in all probability, a city of Idumea, in the book of Joshua; that is to say at the period of the division of the promised land; and lastly, Zoar was again included amongst the towns of Moab at the later period of the prophesies of Isaiah and Jeremiah.

I have mentioned that, at the period of the division of the territories assigned to the several tribes, Zoar was most likely an Idumean town. We read accordingly in Joshua (xv):—"1. This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah, by their families; even to the border of Edom, the wilderness of Zin, southward, was the uttermost part of the south coast. 2. And their south border was from the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay (tongue) that looketh southward. 3. And it went out to the south side, to Maaleh-acrabbim, (the Ascent of the Scorpions), and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa," &c., &c. There is not a word relative to Zoar in this passage, nor in the enumeration of the towns of the tribe of Judah. Besides which, it must be observed that amongst the towns of Judæa,

situated on the frontier of Edom, we find mentioned Adadah,* which I was the first to discover, still bearing the same name, on the high ground reached through the Ouad-ez-Zouera, after having crossed the Ouad-et-Thaemah. The limit of the tribe of Judah must then necessarily have passed very near Zoar, and Saint Jerome was quite correct in placing this town on the extreme frontier between Palestine and the Land of Moab.

I must here refer to two very important passages taken from Ezekiel, which fix the southern limit of the promised land (chap. xlvii. v. 19): "And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh, the river to the Great Sea. And this is the south side southward." And further on (chap. xlviii. v. 28): "And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the Great Sea." The commentators have given Jericho for the Tamar mentioned in these two verses. But this identification, already proposed by the Chaldean text, is not admissible, for Jericho was never on the southern limit of Judæa. It seems quite evident that the place here mentioned is the Tamara or Tamaro which I discovered at Maïet-Embarrheg; such being the case, the position of the *Ascent of the Scorpions* (Maaleh-acrabbim), might be identified with one of the two ouads of Zouera or Maïet-Embarrheg.

I now proceed to lay down a comparative table of the localities and ruins which I have visited, in the Land of Moab, according to the ancient places with which they may be identified:—

* Josh. xv. 22.

Kharbet-Zouera-et-Tahtah	Zoar, Segor.
Kharbet-Esdoum	Sodom.
Djebel-Esdoum or Djebel-el-Melehh	The Mountain of Sodom (Salt Mountain).
Djebel-es-Soufah	Soufah.
Kharbet-Safieh	"
Rhôr-Safieh	"
Rhor-en-Nemaïreh	"
Kharbet, and Bordj-en-Nemaïreh	Nimrim, Bennemarim, Benamerium.
Talâa, and Kharbet-Sebâan	Zeboiim.
Birket-el-Esal	"
Kharbet-Emthaïl	"
Kharbet-es-Saïetbeh	"
Taouahin-es-Soukkar	"
El-Megrâah	"
El-Lisan	He-Lisoun.
Kharbet-abd-er-Rahim	"
Kharbet-Adjerrah	Agalla, Adjelim, Eglaim.
Bir-el-Hafaïeh	" " "
Kharbet-Nouêhin	" " "
Kharbet-Sarfah	" " "
Redjom-Mahfour	" " "
Kharbet-Emrâah	" " "
Redjom-el-Hammah	" " "
Redjom-el-Aabed	Luhïth, Maâlah, He-Loueïth.
Kharbet-fouqoûa Ouad-Emdebeâ	Medeba, Damnaba.
Schihan	Shihon.
Kharbet-Medjeleïn	"
Kharbet-Tedoum	"
Beit-el-Kerm	"
Er-Rabba	Ar, Rabbath-Moab, Areopolis.
Nameless ruins	" " "
El-Karak	Kir-haraseth, Kir-Moab, Charak-Môba.
Ayn-Sara	" " " "
Ayn-Aqbech	" " " "
Ayn-el-Bças	" " " "
Qoubbet-Habisieh	" " " "
Deir-el-Mekharib	" " " "
Ayn-et-Thabib	" " " "
Ayn-es-Sekkeh	" " " "
Ayn-el-Guemayn	" " " "
Omm-Sedry	" " " "
Ayn-Zeboub	" " " "
Ayn-Ersés	" " " "
Djebel-el-Hadits	" " " "
Djebel-Dzafel	" " " "
Redjom and Ayn-Talaa	" " " "
Ouad-el-Kharadjeh	" " " "
Ayn-ed-Drâa	" " " "
Kharbet-ed-Drâa	" " " "
Nameless ruins	" " " "

It remains now to discuss the correctness of the identifications I propose.

Those of Zoar, Sodom, and the Salt Mountain are so closely connected, that if one of the three is clearly established, the two others must immediately and necessarily follow. Let us then take Sodom, which is undoubtedly the most important of the three localities, and let us prove, in the first place, by the concordance of all the texts, sacred and profane, in which it is mentioned, that Sodom, the town fallen under the curse of the Almighty, did actually exist at the northern point of the Djebel-Esdoum, or Djebel-el-Melehh, on the spot where huge masses of disconnected ruins, still visible, and perfectly distinguishable, exhibit themselves as a perpetual warning to human wickedness.

The name of Sodom is written in the Bible, סדום;— in Arabic (Isdoum), اسدم; and in Greek, Σόδομα (Sodoma) This city was situated on the shore of Lake Asphaltites; for it was in the vicinity of Zoar, which also stood at the southern point of the Dead Sea, on its western coast. In fact, when Lot separated from Abraham, he chose for his residence the plain of Jordan (the ככר הירדן of Holy Writ, the μεγα πεδιον of the Greeks), as far as Sodom.*

"10. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

"11. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and

* Genesis, xiii.

Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

"12. Abraham dwelled in the land of Canâan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent towards Sodom."

From the tenor of these verses it clearly results that Lot, intending to remove his encampment to the end of the plain, carried it as far as Sodom. To reach that place, he had to cross neither the Jordan nor the Lake Asphaltites; and as it appears certain that Zoar was at the extremity of this fertile land, so fertile that it is compared to the land of Egypt, and even to the garden of Eden, it seems equally evident that Sodom, in the immediate neighbourhood of Zoar, must have been situated likewise at the farthest end of the plain taken possession of by Lot.

Strabo (book xvi.) writes as follows:—"It is said that this country is burnt up by fire; evidences of this fire are traceable in certain baked and calcined mountains, in the direction of Masada; in deep rents and clefts, in a soil like ashes; in rocks distilling pitch, and in rivers of boiling water, emitting from afar off a loathsome odour. Here and there, places formerly inhabited by man are now confused masses of ruins. It is thus easy to put faith in the tradition universally believed throughout the country, that thirteen cities formerly existed there. We are even told that ruins still exist of the metropolis, Sodom, the circumference of which extends to about sixty stadia. Earthquakes, eruptions of subterraneous fires, warm, bituminous, and sulphureous waters are said to have caused this lake to overflow its original

borders; rocks have been set on fire; and at the same time these cities were either swallowed up or deserted by as many of the inhabitants as were able to escape." (Letronne's translation.) From this passage it clearly results that Sodom, and the appertaining land, were in the same region as Moasada (Masada). Now, beyond all contradiction, Masada was on the western shore of the Dead Sea, therefore Sodom and Zoar were likewise on the same side.

Let us also remember that Josephus* mentions the length of Lake Asphaltites as being five hundred and eighty stadia; *that it extends as far as Zoara in Arabia*, whilst its breadth is only one hundred and fifty stadia; *that in its vicinity is the land of Sodom*, &c. We must, then, conclude again, that since Zoar was at the southern extremity of the lake, Sodom was likewise at the southern extremity; and as nobody can suppose that in measuring the *length* of the lake, Josephus should have passed from one shore to the other; necessarily, both Zoar and Sodom were on the south-western extremity of Lake Asphaltites.

Galen,† when speaking of the mineral salt found on the shores of the Dead Sea, makes use of the following expression:—προσαγορεύουσι δ' αὐτοὺς (ἅλεις) Σοδομενοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν περιεχόντων τὴν λίμνην ὀρῶν, ἃ καλεῖται Σόδομα. This salt is called *salt of Sodom*, from the name of the mountains in the neighbourhood of the lake, which mountains bear also that appellation. Thus, the *Salt Mountain*, the *Djebel-Esdoum* of the Arabs, was, in the opinion of Galen, correctly called Sodom.

* Bel. Jud. iv. 4. 8.

† Lib. iv., De Simplicium Medicamentorum Facultatibus, cap. xix.

It seems unnecessary to argue any longer on a fact which nobody will be inclined to question ; all scholars agree in opinion that Sodom was on the western shore of the Lake Asphaltites. The site of this town has never been sought for on the eastern shore, which became afterwards an integral part of the Land of Moab, properly so called. We may therefore boldly establish this first point, that Sodom was at the southern end of the Dead Sea, on its western shore.

Let us now remember that Genesis (xix. 15 and 23) expressly tells us that *Lot departed from Sodom "when the morning arose," and entered Zoar when "the sun was risen upon the earth."* It results incontestably upon this fact, that from Sodom to Zoar the distance could not exceed a league (three English miles), at the very utmost. Any locality placed on the eastern shore of Lake Asphaltites, is then necessarily excluded from any pretension to represent the site of the *Biblical* Zoar.

And now, if on the very spot where (from Scriptural and historical information) Sodom ought to exist, Zoar and the Salt Mountain mentioned by Galen, under the *name of Sodom* (and not under *that of the Mountain of Sodom*), a circumstance sufficiently remarkable—I say, if on this very spot we find a huge mountain of mineral salt, the only one of the kind in the country, called Djebel-Esdoum, bearing on all the declivities flanking its northern point, the extensive ruins of a town : ruins amongst which you can distinguish, on a careful examination, many foundations of walls ; ruins, again, which the inhabitants of the country are in the habit of calling Kharbet-Esdoum (Ruins of Sodom),

and of applying to them the tradition concerning Sodom; if, besides, within somewhat more than half a league from this place (a mile and a half English measurement), towards the mountain range, we fall in with other ruins of a town called Zouera-et-Tahtah, the lower town of Zoar, is it even possible to question the identity of Kharbet-Esdoum with Sodom, and of Zouera-et-Tahtah with Zoar or Segor? I certainly think not.

But it has been often urged that the towns that fell under the Divine wrath were destroyed by fire from heaven in the first instance; then submerged under the Dead Sea, which was formed suddenly, so as to drown the valley of Siddim, and the vestiges of the cities formerly standing in that valley. Such is in substance what has been objected to the position I maintain, of having discovered on the spot the still perfectly distinguishable remains of the cities of the Pentapolis.

Upon what basis rests the interpretation produced against my opinion? In what book, in what narrative, has the catastrophe of the Pentapolis been so described as to allow for a moment the supposition that the condemned cities were overwhelmed under the lake? Is it in the Holy Bible? Is it in the works of the ancient writers? Neither in the one nor the other. I cannot guess what dreaming commentator has originated the fable I have analysed in a short inquiry; and this fable, precisely because it is the more preternatural and inexplicable, has been hitherto received and adopted without examination. From the date of this invention many travellers in Palestine have eagerly repeated the same imaginary legends, without choosing (no easy undertaking) to ascertain by personal

examination the truth of the facts the narrative of which they were perpetuating on the faith of those writers who had preceded them. Thus statements, utterly at variance with the truth, by a long chain of hereditary assertion, equally valueless, become at last so firmly established, and so generally received as authorities, that my travelling companions and myself have, on our return, been set down as impostors, or, at the best, as incompetent observers, unable to examine correctly the nature and peculiar features of any given ground.

I ventured to assert that it is not possible to find, in the sacred or profane writings of antiquity, a single passage from which it might be inferred that the Dead Sea arose suddenly at the time of the catastrophe of the Pentapolis. I go still further, and repeat even more positively, that all these early authorities unanimously establish that the towns fallen under the curse of the Almighty were never overwhelmed under the waters of the lake. But mere assertions are nothing ; let the question rest upon a comparison of evidences.

We read in Genesis (xix. 24) : "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord, out of heaven ;

"25 : And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

It clearly appears that in this succinct explanation of the catastrophe which destroyed the condemned cities, not a word is mentioned of the intervention of the waters of the Dead Sea.

We read again, further on (verse 28) : "And he (Abraham) looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and

toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

The smoke that went up *from the earth* was that of the fire consuming the towns; but this cannot mean that the towns were overwhelmed under the waters of the lake, for in that case there could have been no smoke.

In Deuteronomy (xxix. 23) we read also; "The whole land thereof is brimstome, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath."

A country overwhelmed under the bitter and salt floods of the Asphaltic Lake, would certainly not have been described in this manner. Thus, in the days of Moses, the idea of the submersion of the Pentapolis was neither asserted nor admitted by anybody.

Amos prophesied in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah, and of Jeroboam, son of Joash, King of Israel.* We read in his book (iv. 11): "I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."

According to Amos, also, the sites of Sodom and of Gomorrah were like "firebrands plucked out of the burning." Certainly, nothing like submersion is either expressed or intended in this verse.

Zephaniah prophesied under Josiah, son of Amon King of Judah. We read in his book (ii. 9): "Therefore as I live, saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,

* Amos, i. 1.

surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Amon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and salt-pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them."

According to Zephaniah, again, the sites of Sodom and of Gomorrah were not buried under the waters of the Dead Sea.

We read in Jeremiah (xlix. 17) also "Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof."

18: "As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it."

A little further on, the prophet repeats the same idea in the following expressions (l. 40): "As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man abide therein."

What is much more positive still, is the tenor of the 38th verse of the 50th chapter—a verse referring to the same country threatened with the divine wrath (38): "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." This passage cannot mean that the country so threatened is on the eve of perishing by submersion, but by the very contrary evil.

On the authority, then, of Jeremiah also, who wrote in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, it is quite clear that the Pentapolis was not overwhelmed under the waters of the Dead Sea.

Lastly, what do we find in the New Testament? In

the second Epistle General of St. Peter we read (ii. 6): "Πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας τεφρώσας καταστροφῇ κατέκρινεν:" "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow."

And in the Gospel of St. Luke our Saviour says (xvii. 29):—Ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἐξῆλθε Λὼτ ἀπὸ Σοδόμων ἔβοεξε πῦρ καὶ θεῖον ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀπώλεσεν ἅπαντας: "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."

This shows that St. Peter, and, what is far more conclusive still, our Saviour himself, ascribed the catastrophe of the cities condemned under the curse, to the *fire* showered upon them by the hand of God. Neither the one nor the other ever alluded to the waters of the Dead Sea.

I have thus quoted, from the Holy Scriptures, many passages showing incontrovertibly that the waters had no share in this awful catastrophe; let my opponents now produce a single line upon which the contrary argument may be defended, even as a supposition.

CHAPTER XII.

The condemned cities—Historical illustrations—Opinion of Reland—Identification of Sodom—Correct locality of Zoar—Existing ruins of Nimrim and Zeboiim—Ruins of Luhith—Ruins of Sihon—Ruins of Rabbath-Moab—Areopolis—Er-Rabba—Karak, or Kir-Moab—The King's Roads of Moab—Preceding travellers—Burckhardt in 1811—Irby and Mangles in 1818—The American expedition under Captain Lynch in 1848.

THESE sacred testimonials might no doubt be considered sufficient, but there can be no harm in multiplying proofs. Let us, then, pass on to the profane writers, beginning with Josephus, the illustrious historian of the Jews. We read in his book :* "In the vicinity of the Lake Asphaltites is the country of Sodom, formerly a flourishing region for it was exceedingly fertile and covered with cities, but now entirely destroyed and burnt up. Tradition says that it was consumed by fire from heaven, on account of the wickedness of the inhabitants. Traces of the heavenly fire and vestiges of five cities are still to be seen there; and all that I have related respecting the land of Sodom is entitled to the full credibility due to things we have witnessed with our own eyes."

In another passage, Josephus says again, when speaking of the inhabitants of Jerusalem : "I think if the Romans had delayed punishing this wicked people, the town would have been either swallowed up in the abyss, or overwhelmed under the waters, or else that it *would have*

* Bel. Jud., iv. viii. 4.

*been destroyed by the fire of Heaven like the land of Sodom."**

And lastly, we read again:† "God resolved to inflict upon them (the inhabitants of Sodom) the chastisement of their crimes, and not only to overthrow their city, but so to devastate their country that it should never again produce either plant or fruit; then God launched forth his thunderbolts upon the city, and burnt it with its inhabitants, causing the very soil to perish in the same conflagration."

It is unnecessary, I suppose, to waste time in showing that according to the opinion of Josephus, the Pentapolis was not destroyed by submersion under the waters of the Dead Sea.

I have already quoted an entire passage from Strabo (lib. xvi.), of which I shall merely repeat here the following sentence: We are even told that *the ruins of their metropolis, Sodom, still exist*, the circumference of which is said to measure about sixty stadia," &c. &c. Thus again, Strabo has no idea that the Pentapolis was destroyed by water.

Let us now turn to Tacitus, who tells us,‡ when treating of the Dead Sea Lake: "Haud procul inde campi, quos ferunt olim uberes, magnisque urbibus habitatos, fulminum jactu arsisse; et manere vestigia; terramque ipsam, specie torridam, vim frugiferam perdidisse." "Not far from this place are fields, that, we are told, were formerly fertile and occupied by large cities, but they were burnt up by thunder and lightning, and the ruins still remain upon them. It is also related that the very earth, scorched by

* Bel. Jud., v. xiii. 6. † Ant. Jud., i. xi. 1.

‡ Hist. lib. v. vii.

heat, has lost all productive power." Thus it appears that Tacitus and Strabo agree in the same conclusion.

Amongst the Arabian authors there are some who believe in the ruins of Sodom and the other cities, destroyed by the hand of the Almighty; for example, a passage of Masoudy, quoted by M. Stephen Quatremère, in a memoir published in the *Journal des Savants* (September, 1852), and extracted from the Arabian manuscript at Constantinople (T. 1st., f. 162), says, in speaking of the towns of the Pentapolis: وقنا هذا خراب لا فيس قيها وهي باقيه الي : "And they have remained even up to our own time. These towns are in ruins, and do not contain any inhabitants."

Abulféda, though not quite so explicit, is of the same opinion. It is true that Edrisy says, Sodom and the neighbouring cities were buried under the waters of the Dead Sea. This proves that there was already a difference of opinion amongst the most distinguished Mohammedan writers. But it by no means controverts the fact, that all the *ancient* authors, sacred and profane, were unanimous in rejecting the fable, according to which, the cities of the Pentapolis were stated to have been overwhelmed under the waters of the Dead Sea.

We may now consider an important point as perfectly established and incontrovertible; namely, that the towns of the Pentapolis were not submersed after their destruction by fire. They therefore could never have been built on the ground which has hitherto been supposed, erroneously, to have been suddenly inundated by the waves of the Lake Asphaltites, produced for that especial purpose. Beyond this, the sacred text itself tends to prove, that supposing even that the plain of Siddim should have been

partly or entirely flooded over by the waters of the lake, those waters could not have affected the cities of the Pentapolis. For according to the highly judicious observation of Reland, whose admirable criticism nobody, I presume, will suspect of error, these cities could not have been situated in the valley of Siddim. What do we read in the Bible* concerning the kings of the Pentapolis? "Hi omnes congregati sunt in valle Siddim, quæ est Mare Salsum." "All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea."

Reland† expresses himself as follows concerning this verse: "There is but one thing stated here, that the valley which was formerly called valley of Siddim, became afterwards the Dead Sea, a fact which I do not mean to controvert. Indeed, this valley may have been flooded by the waters forming this sea, either in consequence of an increase of the Jordan, or of the gushing out of subterranean or other springs; but as no one knows how or when this has happened, nothing is gained by dwelling on the point. The inspired writer does not say that the five cities, Sodom and the rest, were situated in the valley of Siddim; on the contrary, the text quoted leads to an opposite conclusion; that since the kings of these five cities, after having collected their armies, joined together; 'versus vallem Siddim,' *towards the valley of Siddim.* Supposing the translation to be IN THE VALLEY, the meaning is still the same. The probability is, then, that the valley of Siddim was quite distinct from the country in which their five cities were situated. For instance, is there any man who would think of saying: The inhabitants of Amsterdam, of Haarlem, and of Leyden have marched

* Genesis, xiv. 3. † Pal. lib. i. p. 254.

against the enemy and have joined together in Holland? No; precisely for this reason, that the towns here mentioned are all in Holland; but we might very properly say; The inhabitants of these towns have joined together on the spot where the Lake of Haarlem is now placed; and the reasonable conclusion to be drawn from that expression would be, that the Lake of Haarlem is perfectly distinct from the country in which those towns are situated."

It would be difficult, I should think, to refute this chain of reasoning of Reland, and I must therefore be permitted to consider it conclusive. Besides, Reland rests upon another very just and striking observation. He remarks, that in the verse of the xixth chapter of Genesis, where it is stated that God rained down brimstone and fire upon the condemned cities and *upon the whole plain*, the expression made use of by the sacred writer to express this last idea, is ככר, meaning the circuit, *the plain*, and not the *valley of Siddim*.

Not to dwell too long upon this subject, I will merely add, that Reland, with his usual tact, had very correctly guessed that the towns of the Pentapolis must have been situated on the shores of the Dead Sea, and that their ruins might and even ought to be still found there. What the judicious critic surmised from the corner of his study, observations made on the very spot, nearly a century and a half after the publication of his admirable work, have proved to be completely true.

Now, the logical conclusion to be deduced from what I have stated above, amounts to this. As it is unquestionable that, with the exception of Ayn-Djedy (Engedi), Masada, Thamara, and Zoar, there has not been since the

catastrophe of the Pentapolis, any other town built on the western shores of the Dead Sea; it then necessarily follows, that we cannot help recognising Sodom in the Kharbet-Esdoum (ruins of Sodom) of the Arabs, and at the foot of the salt mountain, which Galen expressly names *Sodoma*; and as a like consequence we are compelled also to recognise the other condemned cities in such ruins as we may happen to meet on the same shore.

I cannot suppose that additional proof will be required of the fact—which may be questioned, but not invalidated—that the ruins which are known to the Arabs under the name of the Kharbet-Esdoum, are actually and really the ruins of the biblical Sodom. To contest this positive discovery, there will be but one course left; that of boldly denying the very existence of these ruins, which my companions and myself have twice visited and examined, especially the second time, with the greatest care. I expect to encounter this denial; but, undue modesty apart, I declare that I rest greater confidence in an examination made by myself, minutely and at full leisure, in company with four Frenchmen sufficiently intelligent to discern ruins (where ruins actually exist; and which the Arabs who accompanied us—and with whom, from my knowledge of their language, I was enabled to keep up constant conversation—pointed out to me under the very significant name of Kharbet-Esdoum), than in any contradictory observation, perhaps rather hastily made and with preconceived convictions; such for instance as the impossibility of finding Zoar on the western shore of the Dead Sea. I have superabundantly demonstrated that this last opinion is in flagrant opposition to the text of the Holy Scriptures; it is therefore quite clear that any conclusion

resting more or less upon so mistaken a conception must be steadily rejected, and cast aside as a dangerous fallacy.

Let us now return to the subject. Sodom was situated at the south-western point of the Dead Sea; the salt mountain is called Sodom by Galen. Sodom was therefore on the very same spot with the salt mountain. This mountain is called by the Arabs, indifferently, Djebel-el-Melehh or Djebel-Esdoum, the latter expression being also that of Galen. Thus, then, if on the very situation of the salt mountain we fall in with the ruins of a town, there is every probability that these are the ruins of Sodom; and this probability becomes ân undeniable evidence, if the inhabitants of the country unanimously agree in giving to these ruins the name of Kharbet-Esdoum (ruins of Sodom), and in attaching to them the traditional history of the town destroyed under the curse. All these conditions being strictly fulfilled, it is not possible to refuse credence to the fact that these ruins of a town, called Sodom, are really the ruins of the Sodom mentioned in the Bible.

Amongst the signatures to the Acts of the first Council of Nicæa, is attached the name of Severus, Bishop of Sodom, included in the number of the bishops of Arabia. Reland, who was not likely to overlook this remarkable fact, has discussed it carefully.* "It would be nonsense," says he, "to conclude that in this passage is designated the Sodom overthrown by divine wrath, and which was never to be inhabited again. What is the place which we are to suppose concealed under this denomination? It cannot be Zoar; for Zoar was a town of Palestine, and not of Arabia: neither can it be Sycamazona, which was likewise a town of Palestine, and not an Arabian town."

* Pal., lib. iv., p. 1120. *Ad nomen* Sodoma.

Consequently, Reland surmises that the place mentioned under this name must be some episcopal city of Arabia, a dependency of the metropolitan Bishopric of Bostra, the name of which might have been Zozoyma, or Zoraïma. What induces him to adopt this hypothesis, is a word he finds mentioned in the Arabic index of the names of the bishops who subscribed to the Council of Nicæa. He reads there : سا بير وس الصو صو ماون and this he transcribes, Severus Zozamaon. But let us observe that the *sad* is never pronounced *z*, and that the sound ص, *sad*, if we restore a point which appears to have been forgotten, would make this passage appear thus الصو ضو ماون This is clearly a correct Arabic transcription of the Greek genitive Σοδόμων. Besides, at the present day, it is mere loss of time to call in question the existence of a Bishop of Sodom called Severus, who took a part in the Acts of the Council of Nicæa ; since the Coptic version of these Acts, published and commented on by my learned fellow-citizen and friend M. Charles Lenormant, mentions this holy personage in a very precise manner. Are we to conclude from this that Sodom has risen again from her ruins, and that a modern Sodom, contemporaneous with the Council of Nicæa, was the seat of a Christian bishopric ? Not in the least. Many bishops have borne, and still bear, the titles of cities that only exist in historical memory. At the very same Council there was a Bishop of Ilion ! Are we to conclude from this that Ilion had been rebuilt ? I should suppose not. In the time of Josephus the land of Sodom was still the name of the country where Sodom had existed ; and this name may very well have given birth to the episcopal title which Reland had conceived to have

been incorrectly written. As to the argument drawn by Reland from the fact of Zoar being situated in Palestine, and not in Arabia, this argument falls to the ground; for in Josephus,* Zoar is called the Zoar of Arabia, Ζώαρα τῆς Ἀραβίας, and then in another passage† he tells us that Zoar, Ζώαρα, was one of the twelve towns conquered from the Arabs by Alexander Jannæus.‡

In the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, Musonius, Bishop of Zoar, is classed once amongst the bishops of the second Palestine, and another time amongst the bishops of the third Palestine, this being the more correct classification. Areopolis, Characmoba (Er-Rabbah and Karak), as also Petra, were certainly cities of Arabia, and yet they are enrolled amongst the episcopal cities of the third Palestine: we have no occasion then to wonder that Zoar, an Arabian city, should have been included amongst the bishoprics of the third Palestine.

Let us now consider more especially Zoar itself. In Stephens's "Ethnicals" we read at the word Zoar,—"Zoar is a large borough or fortress of Palestine, situated on the shores of the lake Asphaltites (ἐπὶ τῇ Ἀσφάλτιδι). It was here that Lot took refuge, and contrived to escape from the catastrophe of Sodom." According to this description Zoar was situated on the shore of the Dead Sea. Eusebius (*ad vocem* Βηλὰ) speaks of the site of this same town, and places it on the eastern limit of Idumea (Edom). St. Jerome has at once discovered that this statement involved a serious error,

* Bel. Jud., iv. viii. 4. † Ant. Jud., xiv. ii. 4.

‡ In the narrative of the flight of Lot, at the time of the ruin of Sodom, Josephus calls Zoar "Ζοὼρ;" and he adds, that the locality thereby indicated, still bears the same name at the period when he is himself writing: Ζοὼρ ἔτι καὶ νῦν λέγεται.

and therefore he corrects it thus: "*On the eastern frontier of Judæa.*" But then this frontier could only be on the western shore of the Dead Sea.* A passage from Anastasius the Sinaite, quoted by Reland,† is worth mentioning here. He states that, having made a journey in the direction of Zoar and Tetrapyrgia,‡ he was surprised to find that all the slaves employed in cultivating the public lands were natives of the island of Cyprus, because they were the only people who could endure the deadly influence of the climate; he adds, that this was a fact positively established by numerous experiments.

Eusebius, in his "Onomasticon" (*ad vocem*, θαλάσσα ἡ Ἁλυκη), tells us that the Dead Sea extended all the way between Jericho and Zoar. It is plain that this is a mere repetition of the assertion of Josephus, that the Asphaltitic Lake reached as far as Zoara in Arabia.

St. Jerome, in a passage already quoted above, tells us that Zoar was on the confines of the Moabitic land, dividing it from Palestine. The same Saint Jerome, at the word Bala (Βαλὰ is the correct reading, and not Βαβλὰ), informs us that Zoar was the station of a Roman garrison; and in the *Notitia Dignitatum Imperii*, we find mentioned: "Equites sagittarii indigenæ, Zoaræ;" the

* Reland, p. 622, *ad vocem* Bela. † Pal., p. 1066, *ad vocem* Zoara.

‡ What can this place be, called Tetrapyrgia (Τετραπυργια)? Nobody knows. Might not this name happen to be a Greek translation of the word Kirjath-arba, (the city of the four), the primitive name of which is Hebron (according to Genesis, xxiii. 2—Joshua, xx. 7—and Nehemiah, xi. 25). The Jews, as an explanation of this name, say that it refers to the tombs of the four patriarchs buried in Hebron—Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This explanation of the Jews is most likely the correct one, and it is admitted by Dutripon as the most natural. Tetrapyrgia might also mean the town with the four towers. Of course I give this hypothetical identification for what it may be worth, without insisting upon it.

native mounted archers, at Zoar. This was then the troop garrisoned at Zoar.

We have already examined the tendency of the passages from Josephus concerning Zoar; it remains now to enumerate the biblical texts in which there occur mention of this important locality. In Genesis we read (chap. xix.): 19. "I cannot escape to the mountain (says Lot, speaking to the angels who have come to Sodom for the purpose of cautioning him to leave the doomed city), lest some evil take me and I die." 20. "Behold now this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?), and my soul shall live." 22. "Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar." 23. "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar."

We have already deduced, from this important text, the close neighbourhood that must necessarily have existed between Zoar and Sodom. We see besides that Zoar was not in the mountain, since Lot says, "I cannot escape to the mountain." Another sacred text gives additional strength to this observation. We read (same chapter, xix. 30): "And Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him, for he feared to dwell in Zoar; and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters." It is perfectly clear from this, that to enter the mountain he had to go up as he went out from Zoar. The conclusion then is, that Zoar was not on the mountain, but precisely at the foot of the mountain, since the angels commanded Lot (v. 17) not to tarry in any part of the plain, but to fly towards the mountain. I believe it would be difficult to select a place answering better than Zouera-et-Tahtah (the lower Zoar,

or Zoar at the foot of the hills) all the conditions expressed in these different passages of the Bible : and if, besides these physical conditions, which it is scarcely possible to mistake, we find still attached to the ruins in question the identical name of Zoar, are we not invincibly led to this conclusion that Kharbet-Zouera-et-Tahtah and the Zoar of the Bible are one and the same place ? And yet, such is the strength of preconceived opinions, there are travellers who have visited these places, and who still believe, with Irby, Mangles, and Robinson, that Zoar was on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea.

Let us now proceed with our examination of the scriptural texts bearing reference to Zoar.

The primitive name of Zoar was Bela—so the Bible testifies in the following passages :*—" These made war with Bera, king of Sodom, and with Birsha, king of Gomorrah ; Shinab, king of Admah, and Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar."

" Verse 8. And there went out the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar), and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim." (Textually, in the valley of the fields ; the plural, Siddim, being here preceded by the article ; this means that it retains its general signification, and that it is not to be taken for a proper name).

The origin of the two names, Bela and Zoar, is well worth our dwelling upon for a moment. St. Jerome, in his commentary on Isaiah xv., says, when speaking of Bela,† " Appellatur Bela, id est absorpta, tradentibus

* Genesis, xiv. 2.

† It is called Bela, or the lost city, according to the Hebraic translation ; that

Hebræis quod tertio terræ motu prostrata sit; ipsa est quæ hodie Syro sermone vocatur Zoara." In fact, בלע means *devoravit, absorpsit, perdidit.* This explanation St. Jerome repeats again in another passage. Also, in his "Quæstion. Hebr. in Genesin," cap. xiv. 3, he says: "Tradunt Hebræi hanc eamden in alio Scripturarum loco* Salisa nominari, dicique rursum οσχον Τριετίζουσαν,† id est vitulam conternantem, quod scilicet tertio terræ motu absorpta sit."‡ Lastly, in his commentary on Genesis (xix. 30), he repeats again: "De Segor, quod frequenter terræ motu subruta, Bela primum, &c."

This alleged origin of the name Bela may, in Reland's opinion (not mine), have been completely derived from the orthography of the word, which happens to have a close analogy with the radical בלע. Reland also observes that the Hebraic tradition mentioned by St. Jerome cannot be admitted, because Zoar is not the only town which is called in the Bible *a heifer three years old;* for instance, in Jeremiah (xlviii. 34) we read: "From the cry of Hesbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim, as an heifer of three years old." Here it is, then, Horonaim that goes by the metaphorical expression in question, and this epithet merely means, if I am not mistaken, that the localities so qualified are fertile and flourishing, as a heifer three years old is in the prime of

name is owing to its having been destroyed by three successive earthquakes. It is the same place which is now called in Syrian "Zoara'"—TRANSLATOR.

* 1 Samuel, ix. 4. † Isaiah, xv. 5.

‡ "According to the Hebraic tradition, this place was also called in some other passage of the Scriptures, 'Shalisha;' and it went also by the metaphorical expression of *the heifer three years old,*—meaning that it had been destroyed by three earthquakes."

flesh and strength.* As to the verse of Samuel, where mention is made of the land of Shalisha, there is absolutely nothing to prove that Zoar is the place so designated; and Cohen has not even taken any notice of this rabbinical identification.

Whatever may have been the real origin of this name, whether it had a significative meaning or not, it remains at all events certain, that the primitive name of Zoar was Bela. On what occasion, and for what reason, this name has been altered and changed for that of Zoar, the Holy Scriptures will tell us.

We read in Genesis (xix): "20. Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one (says Lot, speaking to the angels who are commanding him to leave the doomed city of Sodom). Oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

"21. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

"22. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar."

Is it not palpably evident that this last phrase, which from its tenor is completely misplaced, is nothing more

* All readers may not agree with either Reland or M. de Saulcy; and the commentary of St. Jerome may be considered quite correct. It has been generally understood that the expression *vitula conternans* means "restless, bounding, and agitated as a heifer three years old." The verse just quoted from Jeremiah ought then to be thus understood: "From Zoar to Horonaim the country is restless and agitated like a heifer three years old;" and this expression, instead of applying only to the last place, applies to both. Then, again, St. Jerome's explanation would be perfectly natural: Bela was compared to a heifer three years old, on account of its being kept in constant agitation by earthquakes—TRANSLATOR.

than a marginal comment, interpolated at a later period, by the error of some copyist, and also in an inappropriate part of the text?

It was evidently at the 20th verse, after the words "Is it not a little one," that the comment should have been introduced. Therefore, the name of the city was called Zoar. But this does not affect the general argument. The name of Zoar, written in Hebrew צוֹעַר, in Arabic orthography is spelt زغر (Za-ar). It is quite true that in Hebrew צער means *to be small*, from whence the derivative צוֹעַר, *small;* but in Arabic زغر (Za-ar) has not at all that signification—meaning, on the contrary, *multitude abundance.* It is the word صغير*, from the radical صغر,† that means *small*, and is equivalent to the Hebrew expression.

Judging from the true Arabic orthography of the word Zoar, and also from the constant pronunciation, from the biblical times down to the present period, of the name of this identical spot, the natives having always called it Zouâr or Zouêra, we may be led to suppose that the origin of this name (most probably introduced into the sacred texts by interpolation) is not entitled to absolute credit.‡ However, I must hasten to add that this etymology is likewise given by

* Souêir. † Sou-ar.

‡ Here again, we venture to differ with M. de Saulcy. If we are to judge exactly by the Arabic radicals above mentioned, صغر (Souâr) and صغير (Souêir) come certainly nearer, as to pronunciation, to Zouâr and Zouêra than زغر (Za-ar). The only conclusion we can arrive at from his argument is, that the name Zoar is now incorrectly spelt in Arabic زغر (Za-ar). Evidently, M. de Saulcy is still labouring here under the impression of the epithet *vitula conternans*, applied to the neighbourhood of Zoar, being meant as expressing *fertility, abundance.*—TRANSLATOR.

Josephus: Ζοὼρ ἔτι καὶ νῦν λέγεται. Καλοῦσι γὰρ οὕτως, Ἑβραῶι τὸ ὀλίγον: "It is named even up to this day Zoôr, because the Hebrews give this name to anything *that is small.*"*

We have collected together all the passages of the sacred and profane texts that could assist us in determining the position of Zoar, and we have already concluded from them the necessary and undeniable identity of the biblical Zoar with the Zouera-et-Tahtah, the ruins of which are to be seen to the right and left of the opening of the Ouad-ez-Zouera. We need not, then, insist any longer upon the legitimacy of this identification.

According to St. Jerome, Zoar divided Palestine from the Land of Moab; the consequence is, that a portion of the country lying south of Zoar must have belonged to the Moabites. I have quoted above the scriptural verses mentioning, in reference to the frontiers of Moab, a place called Soufah, brought forward (in a phrase rather ambiguously expressed) in opposition to the torrents of the valley of the Arnon. I have concluded from that passage that, if Soufah was a locality, it must have been situated south of the Moabitic country. More than ever I am confirmed in my opinion on this point, precisely because the mountain which is in immediate contact southward with the Djebel-ez-Zouera is, even up to this day, called Djebel-ez-Soufah. I most firmly believe that, in this instance again, a scriptural name, misunderstood until now, has been preserved unaltered; and that a place called from the highest antiquity Ouahab has existed towards the foot of the Djebel-ez-Soufah, which was then at the extreme frontier of the land of the Moabites.

* Bel. Jud. i. xi. 4.

I have already discussed the propriety of identifying with the Kharbet and the Bordj-en-Nemaïreh the ruins of Nimrim, which became afterwards Bennemarim and Bennamerium. It is therefore needless to go over the same ground again. The like observation applies to Adjerrah, which I positively identify with the Eglaïm of the Scriptures and the Agalla of Josephus.

I have mentioned in my itinerary the ruins, beginning at the Talâa-Sebâan, and extending over several consecutive ranges of high flat country, situated at the foot of the mountains of Moab, and from the mouth of the Ouad-ed-Drâa as far as the shore of the Dead Sea : I distinctly recognise in these stupendous ruins the remains of the Zeboïim that perished in the common catastrophe of the Pentapolis. A town so considerable, and the existence of which is attested by the ruins in question, cannot possibly have existed *unobserved* through the centuries whose detailed history has been handed down to us. Several terrific craters—three at least—surround the site which I lay down for Zeboïim, and they must have accomplished instantaneously the destruction of this guilty city ; the explosions proceeding from three directions at the same time must have reduced it to atoms at once. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, to prove that all the doomed cities were situated on the same western shore of the Dead Sea. There is, on the contrary, strong presumptive evidence in favour of the opinion which I think myself bound to set forth, that one at least of the cities of the Pentapolis must have been on the eastern shore. After the catastrophe was once accomplished, why should Lot have gone up into the mountain above Zoar, instead of taking refuge on the eastern shore, which ought to have

appeared to him a much safer retreat, if the terrible chastisement had not spread over that shore likewise ? * Can it be argued that it was not inhabited ? This seems very unlikely, for there was no reason why the shore, afterwards inhabited by the Moabitic people, should not have been quite as fertile as the remainder of the plain. We also know positively that the Emims inhabited that country, and it is very probable that Zeboiim was a city of the Emims.

Neither Lot nor his daughters, who had long dwelt in Sodom, could be ignorant of the existence of a numerous population on the opposite shore ; and the daughters of the patriarch would not have believed in the total destruction of the human species, if the scourge which had driven them from Sodom had not likewise fallen, under their own eyes, upon the shore opposite to that where they had sought a refuge. Besides, the injunction of the angels who summoned the patriarch to fly from Sodom was most formal, "Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Such is their expression ; consequently, the whole plain was threatened and was about to be ruined. Nobody can possibly imagine that the eastern part of the plain should have escaped the general catastrophe.

Everything duly considered, cities could and must have existed at the foot of the mountains of Moab ; and there is nothing to hinder us from believing that one of the cities of the Pentapolis did exist in this place. Consequently, since I find in this very region a stupendous

* It may be replied to this, that Lot was ordered by Divine command to seek refuge in the mountains.—TRANSLATOR.

town crushed into ruins by the craters of volcanic eruptions surrounding it, and part of which is still, to this very day, called Sebâan, I cannot hesitate to recognise in it the Zeboiim of the Scriptures; and I do so with still greater conviction from this circumstance—that these ruins, besides being similar to those of Sodom, cannot possibly be identified with any other city of ancient times. Besides, were objections to be made as to admitting the existence of any one of the cities of the Pentapolis on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, it would be giving at once a death-blow to the presumptions upon which Irby and Mangles in the first instance, then Robinson and other travellers after them, have tried to establish that the ruins situated in the proximity of the peninsula of El-Mezrâah are those of Zoar. Let us repeat again: Sodom could not be much more than half a league distant from Zoar, and in that case Sodom, according to these learned travellers, should have been necessarily, as a forced consequence, situated likewise on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, whether this sea existed before or not—a circumstance which cannot alter the case, as at all events the horizontal distances must have remained the same.

In conclusion, I hope I may be allowed to make use of the same privilege as that exercised by these gentlemen in fixing Zeboiim on the site of the Kharbet-Sebâan, with a safer foundation than they had when they arbitrarily laid down Zoar at this point, without being able to produce a single text or a single traditionary report to sanction their hypothesis.

As in the cases of Nimrim and Adjelim, I have already pointed out the permanency of the scriptural

appellation in respect to the peninsula of the Dead Sea. In the days of Moses it was called הלשדר (the tongue); at the present time it is still called اللسان El-Lisan (the tongue).

Luhith is another place, the correct site of which it is most important to determine. When Eusebius lived and wrote, it was situated on the road from Areopolis to Zoar. Holy writ places it on the acclivity of a mountain; such being the case, Luhith—situated on the beaten track leading from Areopolis to Zoar, which road, without any doubt, passed through the Ouad-ebni-Hammid—must necessarily have been situated in the ouad leading up from the coast of Moab to the plain of Areopolis. Now it so happens that the last ascent leading up to this elevated plain, reaches, through stupendous ruins, a mountain called Djebel-Nouehin or Nouehid: these ruins bearing likewise the same name of Nouehin or Nouehid. But the letters L and N in the mouth of the Arabs of this country, interchange pronunciation with great facility; and, consequently, I have not the slightest hesitation in finding in the ruins, and the mountain of Nouehid, the ruins and the ascent of Luhith.

Eusebius has made known to us the existence of a Moabitic town called Medaba, eight miles distant from Areopolis, on the elevated plain extending south of the Arnon, just as another Medaba, situated nearly opposite, was placed on the elevated plain extending north of the Arnon. If the reader happens to remember that the valley dividing the immense ruins of the Kharbet-Fouqoûa, with its two flanks covered with the remains of a considerable city, is called Ouad-Emdebêa, I suppose he will not be astonished if I formally propose to identify

the Medaba of Eusebius with the ruined town that covers both flanks of the Ouad-Emdebêa. It is true, there exists at the very foot of the hill upon which Karak is built an Ouad-el-Medabeh ; but this ouad immediately takes another name, and can have nothing in common with the Medaba of Eusebius.

It has been shown that Schihan is a very remarkable locality ; and I have had no hesitation in recognising in the ruin crowning the hill of Schihan, one of those temples which were built on the high places. If we recall to our minds the words of Jeremiah (xlviii. 45)—"A fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the corner of Moab"—no one, I suppose, will be surprised if I discover the biblical Sihon in the Schihan of our own days, and if I propose this identification with perfect confidence.

We have seen that a verse of Isaiah (xv. 7) mentions a "brook of the willows :"—"Therefore," says the prophet, "the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows."

A little before, at verse 5, it is said, "His fugitives shall flee unto Zoar." Evidently these fugitives were flying before the enemy ; and the torrent of the willows must have been on the *road* from the elevated plain of Moab to Zoar. Besides, the especial distinctive denomination of *the* brook of the willows proves clearly that there were not several water-courses entitled to that name. I therefore presume to recognise the "brook of the willows" of the Bible, in the water-course having its bed filled with the *Salix Babylonica*, and coming down under the name of Seïl-Ouad-ebni-Hammid, from

the identical valley through which the ancient road passes.

With respect to the towns of Er-Rabbah and Karak, general record identifies them, the first with Rabbath-Moab, the second with Kir-Moab. It is therefore needless to discuss at any great length the soundness of this double identification: I shall merely sum up, in the shortest possible notice, the principal historical facts concerning these two places.

The original name of Areopolis was Ar; this name meaning literally *town*. According to the testimony of Theodoret,* this town has been also called Ariel. The same indication is given a second time by the same author, in his commentary on the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah. This is very possible; but it is by no means certain that the place so named might not have been another locality. Sozomen mentions Areopolis as being an Arabian town, when in fact it was situated in the third Palestine. He mentions also (1. viii. 15), that in Arabia, the Petræans and the Areopolitans fought with great fury to defend the temples of their gods. Stephens, in his Ethnicals, tells us that Areopolis is identical with Rabath-Moba, which is evidently the same as Rabbath-Moab. St. Jerome† gives us the real origin of the name of Areopolis, and has warned us against the temptation of translating this name by the city of Mars.

In the *Notitia dignitatum imperii*, we read—

Cohors tertia alpinorum apud Arnona
Cohors tertia felix Arabum in ripâ vadi Apharis fluvii, in castris Arnonensibus.
Equites Mauri Illyriciani Areopoli.

And lastly—

Equites promoti indigenæ Speluncis.

* Comm. on Isaiah, xv. † Comm. on Joshua, xv.

We are thus fully informed as to the nature of the garrison in Areopolis and on the banks of the Arnon at the period when the Notitia was published. Eusebius and St. Jerome, in the Onomasticon (ad vocem Ἀρνῶν), mention that to the northward there is a place of that name, Arnon, containing a garrison. The expressions made use of by St. Jerome are exactly these: "In satis horribili loco vallis in prærupta demersæ." This abrupt valley is, no doubt, that of the Arnon. Reland has already proposed to identify this same place with that mentioned in the passage of the Notitia, in which it is said that the "Equites promoti indigenæ" are located at the Speluncæ. If now we choose to remember that חרנים (Horonaim), the name of a Moabitic locality often mentioned in the Scriptures, means *the two caverns*, we shall be naturally led to identify the *Speluncæ* of the Notitia with the Horonaim of the Bible.

Two Greek notices of the patriarchates, the second of which is referred to the period of the Emperor Leo Augustus, are inserted in the vast collection of the Byzantine writers. The first gives us: Παρωχμούχου (read Χαρακμωβα) Ἀριόπολις (Ἀρεόπολις), Μάψης, Ἐλοῦσα, Ζαύρα, Βιροσαμών (read Βὶροσαβων).

The second: Χαραγμοῦχα, Ἀρεόπολις, Μάψις, Ἐλοῦσα, Ζώορα, Βιροσαβων.

When these two lists were compiled, most unquestionable Areopolis was an ecclesiastical seat. Let us observe casually that Zoar is placed in this list between Elousa and Birseba. This last city is at the southern extremity of the territory of Judah. Elousa is placed by Ptolemy amongst the cities of Idumea, situated westward of the Jordan. But then, since Zoar is mentioned as being between

these two localities, Zoar was necessarily on the western shore of the Dead Sea, in a prolongation of the valley of the Jordan.*

Areopolis was an episcopal city, and we know the following names of the prelates who were seated there: 1. Anastasius, who is mentioned in the Acts of Ephesus, inserted in the Council of Chalcedon.† 2. Polychronius, who is named in the letter of John of Jerusalem, inserted in the Acts of the Council of Constantinople,‡ and written in the name of the bishops of the three Palestines. 3. Helius, who subscribed to the Acts of the Council of Jerusalem held A.D. 536.§

The last mention of Areopolis which I find made in the ancient writers is from the pen of St. Jerome.‖ It runs as follows: "Audivi quemdam Areopoliten, sed et omnis civitas testis est, motu terræ magno in meâ infantiâ, quando totius orbis littus transgressa sunt maria, eâdem nocte muros urbis istius corruisse."† From the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus it has been ascertained that this event took place in the year of our Lord 315, under the consulate of Valentinian and Valens. This date is of very great importance, since it determines the period of the destruction of the monuments of Areopolis, and amongst them that of the Roman gate, the state of which at the present day exhibits the most decisive evidence of the severity of the earthquake by which it was partially overthrown.

* Reland, Pal. p. 462.
† General Councils, tome iv. p. 118.
‡ General Councils, tome v. p. 192.
§ General Councils, tome v. p. 284.
‖ Comm. on Isaiah, xv.

¶ I have heard of this Areopolis (when it still existed), but the whole city can vouch for the truth of my assertion, that in the time of my childhood, from the effects of a tremendous earthquake, when the sea broke over the shores of the whole earth, the walls of this town were overthrown in a single night.

The original name of Areopolis, Rabbath-Moab, the capital of Moab, has remained nearly unaltered up to this day, for the ruins of this town are still called Er-Rabba, whilst not a trace subsists in the memory of the inhabitants of the country, of the comparatively modern appellation of Areopolis.

Let us now pass to Karak. Not the slightest doubt can arise as to the identity of Karak with Χαρακμωβα (Karak of Moab). Ptolemy mentions this place among the cities of Arabia Petræa, and assigns to it the following longitude and latitude, $66\frac{1}{6}°$ and 30°. In the ancient ecclesiastical notices it bears the name of Χαραγμοῦχα, or the still more corrupt one, owing to the carelessness of copyists, of Παρωχμοῦχου, and it has been classed amongst the cities of the third Palestine. Stephens, in the Ethnicals, says, that in his day this town was considered a part of the third Palestine, but that Ptolemy, who might be relied upon, had classed it amongst the Arabian cities. He adds, that it went also by the name of Μωβουχαραξ.

This city was the seat of a bishopric, for we find amongst the prelates who subscribed to the Council of Jerusalem in 536, Demetrius Χαρακμώβων.

At the period of the crusades, Karak became a most important place, as the advanced post of the Christians in Arabia. We find the following notice in the narrative of Foucher de Chartres (ch. xliii.) : "In 1115, the king went to Arabia, and built there a castle on a certain mountain, which he recognised as having been situated, from the remotest period of antiquity, in a commanding situation, not far from the Red Sea ; distant about three days' march from that sea, and four days' march from Jerusalem. Baldwin placed a strong garrison in this

castle, with the object of commanding all the surrounding country, for the advantage of the Christians, and he ordered that it should be called Mont-Real, in honour of himself, who had constructed this fort in a very short time, with few people to assist him, and with remarkable boldness."

A little further on (ch. xliv.) we read again : "In 1116, the king went to visit the castle, and proceeded on as far as the Red Sea, to reconnoitre a country that he had not yet seen, and to examine if, by chance, he should not find there some of the things that we were in want of."

William of Tyre relates the same facts as occurring in the year 1115 (lib. xi. ch. xxvi.). This historian informs us that in 1172 Saladin besieged Mont-real, but without success (lib. xx. ch. xxvii.). Some years afterwards (in 1183) the same Emir undertook a second time the siege of Karak, and succeeded in getting possession of it (lib. xxii. ch. xxviii.). "It showed great talent on his part," says the historian, "to have taken by siege a city anciently called the Stone of the Desert, *mes l'en la desine ore le Crac*—but now they call it the Krac." Renaud de Chastillon was then lord of (*Sire du*) the Krak of Mont-Real, *il estait sire de cele terre de par l'eritage se fame.* Everybody knows that Renaud de Chastillon, having fallen into the power of Saladin, was put to death in presence of this prince, who refused to exercise his usual generosity in his behalf, being determined to revenge, by the death of the lord of Karak, the pillage of a Mohammedan caravan which this chieftain had intercepted and plundered some time before.

Such an important military position as that of Karak

must have been turned to advantage and occupied from the remotest antiquity; and it is exceedingly probable that the modern Karak is built on the site of the strong place of Moab, which is called in the Holy Scriptures by the names of Kir-Moab, Kir-Hareseth, Kir-haresh, Kir-heres, and even Kir-Kheraseth.*

We have seen that the valley of the Arnon is now called by the name of Ouad-el-Moudjeb. Has this name a signification? I cannot say;† and am inclined to think not. Or, rather, does it not contain the indirect tradition of a city of the Land of Moab? What might lead us to suppose so is the first verse of chapter xlviii. of Jeremiah in which we read: "חמשנב *Hemesjeb* is confounded and dismayed." This Hebraic word Hemesjeb, means any high and fortified ground; but several commentators, such as Raschi and Kimhi, declare that it is the name of a particular place. If so, its pronunciation is likely to be very uncertain. This name has been transcribed Misgab; but nothing proves that it ought not to have been transcribed Mousdjeb, and in that case would be almost identical with the modern name El-Moudjeb retained by the Arnon. This hypothesis may be a sound one, but I by no means insist upon it.

To wind up geographical references regarding the Land of Moab, I turn to another verse of the first book of Samuel (xxii. 3), where it is written: "And David went thence (from the cave of Adullam) to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the King of Moab, Let my father and

* Isaiah, xvi. 7 and 11; Jeremiah, xlviii. 31; Kings, ii. 13, 26.

† In the Kamous the plural صواجب means *wrestling places*, where men throw each other down for exercise. In that case, the valley of the Arnon would mean the valley of the wrestling-place. But this seems to me more than doubtful.

my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me." I am completely ignorant as to whether any traces exist of this Mizpeh of Moab.

It remains only to speak of the singular roads, with fixed stones, which we have found in great numbers in the plain of Moab. I consider them as no other than those ancient roads mentioned in the Book of Numbers (xxi.) : 21. "And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon, King of the Amorites, saying (22), Let me pass through thy land : we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards ; we will not drink the waters of the well : but we will go along by the king's highway, until we be past thy borders."

It seems to me very probable that the beaten tracks then called דרך המלך, as they are designated at present ضرب السلطان (Zarab-el-Sultân—the king's roads), were bordered, right and left, by long piles of large stones, so that there might be no possibility of turning out of them, to enter the cultivated lands, under the pretext that they were not clearly defined. Besides, this mode of marking out the roads was not peculiar to the Moabites, since the American officers sent by Captain Lynch to Masada, on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, fell in, beyond the Ouad-es-Seyal, with a road of exactly the same description ; and I myself have since found another at Djembah, a locality presenting very evident signs of a town contemporaneous with the remotest biblical periods, and situated between Zoar and Hebron ; that is to say, in the land of Canaan. There is then strong reason to suppose that the roads on which we travelled in the Land of Moab were "the king's highways." of the same description as

those which the Israelites engaged to follow without any deviation, through the territory of Sihon, King of the Amorites.

The information that had reached us up to the present day concerning the modern state of the Land of Moab was very inconsiderable, although the district properly so called had been already twice explored, without taking into account the excursion made, in 1822, by a Mr. Hyde, whose name we found incribed on the walls of the temple of Beit-el-Kerm. First of all, the celebrated Burckhardt visited this strange country in 1811: he began by travelling through the country of Amori, situated north of the Arnon, where he discovered the sites of several biblical localities; for instance, those of Medeba and El-Aaleh. Having next crossed the Arnon, which he lays down as a boundary between the provinces of Belka and Karak, he crossed the plain which I travelled over myself, but more to the eastward than I did. Accordingly he passed within sight of the hill of Schihan, which he left at a distance of three-quarters of an hour's walk to his right, without visiting it. From the place called Mehalet-el-Hadj, he found a paved road leading towards Rabba; that is to say, in a south-westerly direction. He passed through Beit-el-Kerm, and stopped at the ruins of the temple, to which he attributes, without sufficient cause, a very remote antiquity. He falls into another error when he says that the façade of that temple was an octostyle (a front of eight pillars), and that those pillars were only three feet in diameter. We ourselves saw that the façade is a tetrastyle (a front of four pillars), and that these columns are of much larger dimensions. He discovered, as we did, amongst the mass of ruins, fragments

of columns of smaller proportions, but evidently belonging to other buildings.

At a distance of an hour and three-quarters' ride from Beit-el-Kerm (بيت القرم), Burckhardt fell in with the ruined village of Hameïmat (حميمات); from thence he visited the remains of Er-Rabba. Three-quarters of an hour after leaving the ruins of the last-named place, proceeding south-east, he reached two abundant springs called El-Djebeïbah and El-Yaroud. He then passed through the ruins of Qaritslah (قريثله), and arrived at last at Karak; the Scheikh of this town was then called Youssef-Medjaby; but Burckhardt is here certainly mistaken, and has written Medjaby for Midjielly.

At Karak our traveller, who did not succeed in finding either the opportunity or means of descending to the Rhôr, tried to procure all the information he could concerning the topography of the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. He mentions the river Djerre (سيل جرّه), which most certainly is not the Nahr-ed-Drâa, but evidently the Seïl-Ouad-ebni-Hammid, that runs out of the Ouad-Adjerrah; for he adds, that in the valley through which this river passes, which he identifies very cautiously with the Zared of Scripture, there are ruins of walls and buildings situated at a distance of five hours' march north of Karak.

He mentions likewise the Rhôr-Safieh (ضو صفيه), which he lays down towards the mouth of the Ouad-el-Ahhsa, as being in the winter season the rendezvous of several powerful wandering tribes. The river that runs down from the Ouad-el-Ahhsa divides, as he says, the country of Karak from the southern district called Djebal. He surmises that the situation of the Zoar of Scripture must be looked for in the Rhôr-Safieh. He mentions also the

Seïl-Assal, writing this name عسل, without being positive that the orthography of the word is not more properly Assan. This river runs, according to his account, near Katherabba (we must observe here, that Burckhardt makes use of the English *th*, which is nearly identical, in regard to pronunciation, with the Arabic ث, expressed by *tz*). After Katzerabba, he mentions El-Nemeïrah—the same En-Nemaïreh through which we subsequently passed. And lastly, he speaks of El-Mezrâah as being situated opposite the middle of the Dead Sea; and close to this last place he mentions the Taouahin-es-Sakkar (طواحين السكر), as being the ruins of an ancient city.

Burckhardt had procured, as may be seen from the above statement, very correct information, and he had also taken notes on the vegetation of the Rhôr; for instance, he mentions the *Asclepias Procera* as being found there in abundance. This shrub is called by the Arabs, Ochêr (عشير). Such is in substance the amount of Burckhardt's bold investigation.

He was succeeded (in 1818) by Messrs. Irby and Mangles, of whose narrative I shall give a corresponding summary. Having left Hebron on the 18th of May, they took two days to reach the Ouad-ez-Zouera, by which route they descended to the Rhôr, intending to proceed to Petra after calling at Karak. These gentlemen first mention the ruin of the small Arab fort called Zouera-el-Fouqah, which they call El-Zowar. On the 20th they crossed the Sabkhah, after having encamped at the foot of the Salt Mountain, or Mountain of Sodom. As they proceeded, they observed very correctly, that the mountains on the western shore of the Dead Sea diminish in height as they extend southward, whilst the mountains

on the eastern shore maintain constantly the same elevation. In the Sabkhah they crossed six water-courses more or less rapid. They next reached a wooded country of a very pleasing aspect, the Rhôr-Safieh. They found here a small river which the Arabs told them was called the Nahr-el-Hesan (the river of the Horse; but they wrote it down, El-Nahr-Houssan). The glades were well cultivated, and sown with barley.

At that season of the year, Irby and Mangles suffered much in the Rhôr from the annoyance of gigantic horse-flies (most likely the gad-fly or ox-fly), the visitation of which, they were told, was an incidental plague that contributed much to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Arabs they met with were Ghorneys (evidently the same name as the Rhaouarnas), and, more fortunate than we were, these earlier travellers had only reason to remember with gratitude the hospitable welcome they received from them. The Ghorneys differed a good deal (the observation is just) in their habits and customs from the more nomadic tribes, for they dwell in huts made of mud, branches, and reeds, and cultivate the neighbouring lands. After having crossed the Houssan, they proceeded along the foot of the mountains, and over a plain encumbered with huge boulders of red and green granite, of green, black, and red porphyry, of serpentine, of black basalt and breccia, and many other species of costly rocks. It may be surmised, they said, that from this country the ancients procured the precious materials from which they constructed the innumerable columns adorning to the present day the baths and mosques of the East.

The mountains they passed by seemed to them generally formed of grey limestone or marble. They reached the

peninsula, and encamped on the side of a delightful ravine watered by a river called El-Dara (Nahr-ed-Drâa), the banks of which were covered with a dense thicket of dwarf palm-trees, acacias, thorns, and oleanders. The itinerary of our travellers in the Rhôr may be summed up thus: In two hours and a half they went from the western bank of the Rhôr—that is to say, from the foot of the Salt Mountain—as far as the Rakh, the first stream of brackish water. This name is quite unknown to me. From thence, in half an hour, they reached Szafije (Safieh) or Ahsa, and the Nahr-el-Houssan (this without any doubt is the Nahr-Safieh); from Safieth they marched towards the Nahr-el-Assel (Nahr-el-Esal); and from thence, in two hours, they reached the sea; and in two hours more El-Dara (Ed-Drâa), where they passed the night.

The next morning, by dawn, Messrs. Irby and Mangles proceeded to climb the mountain to the summit. They fell in, on the way, with the chaos through which we ourselves afterwards passed. According to their account, this mass of destruction "consisted of huge fragments, each as large as a house, which, having rolled down from the heights, had fallen in horrible confusion into the precipice below, one over the other." A quarter of an hour afterwards they arrived at a small tank, situated beneath a single olive-tree; (this is, no doubt, the Aÿn-es-Sekkah which we saw at the point called Omm-Sedereh). They next observed fields of barley in the valley on their left, and winding through these fields a watercourse called Souf-Saffa, running into the Dead Sea; (the name of this river has never been given to me by any of our attendant Arabs). They noticed on the way the remains of ancient aqueducts which had conveyed water to some mills; (these

are evidently at the places called Aÿn-es-Sara and Aÿn-Aqbeck or Qobeck). They had then precisely in front of them the castle of Karak, but could not perceive any portion of the city. This castle presented two separate masses—the one at the southern angle of the town, the other more to the northward, and consisting of a large building named by them the Seraglio of Melah-a-Daher; (there can be no doubt this is the tower built by Malek-ed-Dhaher-Beïbars). Between these two masses of fortifications they noticed the only gate giving access into Karak—a gate with an orgival arch, surmounted by an Arabic inscription, and placed at the entrance of a natural cavern. This is the tunnel by which we left Karak, and where we were saluted by a volley of stones.

Messrs. Irby and Mangles, who were not subjected to any annoyance while in Karak, had ample leisure to examine the antiquities contained in this extraordinary specimen of a town. The castle and its church, the tower of Beïbars, the mosque and the cisterns, were carefully inspected by turns. These enterprising travellers, however, have fallen into an historical error as regards the Castle of Mont Real, which it is necessary to rectify. They attribute the siege and capture of Karak to Godfrey of Bouillon, who, according to them, gave it the name of Mons Regalis. We have already proved, beyond further question, that the conquest and subsequent denomination are both to be attributed to King Baldwin, who took possession of Karak at a much later period, in 1115.

They encountered some fragments of ancient columns, and also a bas-relief fixed into a wall, representing an expanded wing, seven feet long and four feet broad, and

bearing a striking analogy to the wing of the winged globe so often represented on Egyptian monuments. I have no doubt that what they saw was in reality the fragment of a winged globe, to which was joined the two mystical eyes of Horus ; one of these I afterwards discovered myself. Lastly, they found amongst the ruins two Greek inscriptions, which they considered as of no interest. They visited likewise the same fountain and sepulchral grottoes at the bottom of the valley of Karak, in front of which I subsequently passed. It is abundantly evident that Karak contains many unexplored early antiquities, dating back even to the time of the Moabitic dominion ; but I confess, in all humility, that I am not disposed to seek them there a second time.

After a tolerably long excursion to Petra, Messrs. Irby and Mangles returned to Karak. They call the Scheikh of this place Joussouf Magella. From thence they passed on to the Rhôr, to examine the ruins situated on the banks of the Dara (Ed-Drâa) ; ruins which they expected would prove identical with those of Zoar. They returned a second time to Karak, and thence proceeded towards the Haouran, through the plain of Moab. Their first encampment was at the ruins of Er-Rabba. On the 6th of June they visited Beit-Kerm (Beit-el-Kerm), distant from Er-Rabba a mile and a half, in a northerly direction. They decided correctly that the ruined temple is of the Roman period, and they surmise that this temple might probably have taken the place of that of Atargatis,* which was in Carnaïm.† At a distance of two hours and a half's journey, north of Beit-Kerm, they descried a small eminence

* An Assyrian Divinity considered by Strabo and others as identical with Venus.

† 1 Maccabees, v. 43.

commanding all the country round, which they call Scheik-Harn (meaning Schihan).

On the 8th of June they proceeded to cross the Wady-Modjeb (Ouad-el-Moudjeb), by following the remains of the paved Roman road. As they were descending the pass, they saw distinct ruins of military buildings of the Roman period, most likely those of the forts I have mentioned above as having contained the garrisons *ad Speluncas*. After that they passed several milestones, all of which (those at least that were legible) bore the date of the reign of Trajan. At the bottom of the Ouad, which they reached after an extremely fatiguing and difficult descent of an hour and a half, they found the ruins of a Roman bridge. On the opposite bank of the Ouad they fell in again with the remains of the ancient road, and also several more milestones, bearing the name of Marcus Aurelius.

It is foreign to my subject to speak of the itinerary they followed through the land of Amori; that is to say, through the country situated north of the Ouad-el-Moudjeb, or Arnon. I shall only add, that I congratulate most sincerely Messrs. Irby and Mangles on the accuracy of their observations.

A few words now with reference to Captain Lynch's excursion on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, as far as Karak, and I shall have collected together under one view all that is known up to the present period respecting the land of the Moabites.

On the 30th of April, 1848, Captain Lynch, in one of his two boats, anchored towards the bottom of the gulf formed by the northern point of the peninsula, called by him point Costigan, in memory of the unfortunate traveller

who had been his predecessor on this inhospitable shore. He then proceeded to the miserable village of El-Mezraah, distant about half a league (a mile and a half) from the anchorage. He there made the same observation which occurred to ourselves at a later period concerning the strange physiognomy of the Rhaouarnas who inhabit the place : the style of their features and general physiognomy is more decidedly African than Asiatic.

Here he received a visit from Suleiman, son of Abd-Allah, the Christian Scheikh of Karak, who was sent by his brother Christians for the express purpose of inviting the American officers to visit their melancholy town. The whole expedition was suffering from fatigue and illness, and even in danger of death, unless the commander could remove his party into a more salubrious air than that of the furnace in which they had long been broiled. Captain Lynch, principally urged by this motive, determined upon undertaking the excursion to Karak. He was also a little instigated by the natural pride of not liking to shun an apparent danger, when any change of climate had become so necessary to his exhausted companions.

The next day he visited the ruins situated in the vicinity of El-Mezraah, and which he concluded to be those of Zoar. Amongst these he made out the enclosure of a square building, and many foundations of structures, strewed with fragments of pottery ; he also picked up a small millstone. These vestiges of foundations presented all the marks of remote antiquity; and Captain Lynch does not hesitate in recognising in these ruins the same that Irby and Mangles had visited a considerable time before, and in applying to them, without sound reason, the name of the Zoar of the Scriptures.

On his return from this excursion, Captain Lynch found that Mohammed, the Mussulman Scheikh of Karak, had just arrived with the Christian Scheikh Abd-Allah himself. Mohammed, who was no other than our friend Mohammed-el-Midjielly, at once struck the American officer as being the most impudent, the most insufferable, and the most cowardly animal he had ever encountered. On the 2nd of May, notwithstanding he would most willingly have given up his intended journey to Karak, Captain Lynch, thinking he might compromise the dignity of his country were he to refrain from visiting that town, started for it early in the morning.

He crossed the rivulet that descends from the Ouad-ebni-Hammid, and next the level eminence commanding the plain, which he designates as the plain of Zoar. On this ridge he found the remains of a fort, which he considered as contemporaneous with the crusades. Reaching from thence a point distant about two miles more to the southward, he entered the Ouad-el-Karak, and judging by the description he gives, we clearly recognise the frightful abyss called the Ouad-el-Kharadjeh.

On his journey he encountered the delightful rivulet of Ed-Drâa, but without recording its name ; in short, he followed, as he must have done, but from the opposite direction, the same road we ourselves travelled on in returning from Karak to the Rhôr. The gigantic chaos which I have described could not fail to excite Captain Lynch's curiosity ; accordingly he mentions it as one of the most surprising phenomena of Nature he had ever seen.

Before long the valley up which Captain Lynch was ascending became well planted with olive-trees ; the

ruined fortress of Karak and the majestic quadrangular tower of the north-western point of the platform presented themselves to the travellers, who arrived at last at the tunnel already named by me, which they necessarily passed through, as it forms the only entrance to Karak on that side. Captain Lynch took up his quarters at the Christian convent, as Irby and Mangles had done before; the only Franks who, since the time of the Crusades, had ventured into this miserable town without disguise, and in their avowed characters. The little church, which I found completely finished, was then building. The American officers proceeded at all risks to explore the town and the ruins of the castle. The extent and importance of the last greatly excited their admiration. They next examined the large tower, which appeared to them of Saracenic construction. In the afternoon Captain Lynch endeavoured to ascertain if he might be allowed to proceed in the direction of the Rhôr-Safieh, but he was told it was quite impracticable, and therefore gave up, much against his will, the intention of visiting this splendid delta, as he has designated it.

On the 31st of May, at half-past six in the morning, Captain Lynch, who had met with nothing but opposition and annoyance from the insolent Scheikh of Karak, succeeded in effecting his escape from this den of cut-throats; but in order of battle, and carbine in hand. Mohammed, enraged because he had not been able to extort anything from the Americans, followed them, and most likely with evil intentions. Captain Lynch ordered Lieutenant Dale and one of his most determined men to place themselves suddenly on each side of Mohammed's horse, and force the scoundrel to march on, watching him

closely like a prisoner, with orders to blow his brains out at the first moment that might indicate flight or treachery on his part. Mohammed, finding himself caught, became as humble and as mean as he had been until then haughty and impertinent. He was led in this manner all the way down to the anchorage where the boat was waiting for the officers and crew. The old Scheikh, Abd-Allah, received a present from Captain Lynch; whilst Mohammed obtained no other bakhshish than permission to return to his den, which was freely accorded. He entreated Captain Lynch most urgently to give him at least some gun caps, that he might not be exposed to the shame of returning home empty-handed; his supplications were totally unheeded, and procured him absolutely nothing. The boat was immediately set afloat again; every body went on board, and Captain Lynch left the shores of Moab, in all probability never to visit them again. His observations are brief and condensed, but correct in many particulars. Perhaps the remembrance of the agreeable visit of the American gentlemen may have sharpened the feelings of Mohammed-el-Midjielly towards us when we presented ourselves in his distinguished capital two years afterwards. This digression has been rather long, and reminds me that it is high time to resume the diary of our journey.

CHAPTER XIII.

Congratulations upon the success of the journey—A startling matrimonial proposition—Encampment of Ahouethats—Departure of the Beni-Sakhars—Passage of the Sabkhah—Imminent dangers surmounted—General satisfaction—Compensation for losses—The Salt Mountain of Sodom—Ruins of Sodom—Ruins of Zoar—Extraordinary natural phenomenon—Pass, or Ascent of the Scorpions—Geological appearances—Ruins of the Upper Zoar—Botanical Discovery—Ruins of Admah—Rain, hail, and cold—A sheltering grotto—Proposed identification—A friendly sentinel—The Adadah of Scripture—Ruins of El-Qeritein, or Kerioth—Hezron—Caves of Djenbeh—Encamping ground.

January 22nd.

It would be difficult to express the high spirits with which we rose this morning. In a few hours we shall be at the entrance of the Ouad-ez-Zourea; we shall have left, never again to return to them, the condemned shores upon which we have encountered so many dangers in so short a space of time. We are bringing home with us geographical and archæological documents of inestimable value. This journey, in which we were told we should infallibly perish, we have accomplished without a scratch. We are all safe and sound in heart and limb. Our purse only has suffered, and become lank and consumptive. It must be confessed we have distributed liberally; but have we paid too dearly for the credit of being the first to visit many localities, the knowledge of which cannot fail to throw a new light upon the holy Scriptures? No, certainly not. Let us thank Providence for the assistance granted to us; and since it has been written "Help thyself and Heaven

will help thee," let us not linger in our Arabian Capua, but proceed on our journey with renewed vigour and perseverance.

This time we have no occasion to stimulate our moukris to exertion. Their natural laziness and apathy are conquered by the apprehension of many dangers, from which they hope to be soon delivered. They are packing the mules rapidly of their own accord.

Whilst our preparations for marching are in progress I receive the visit of our Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs: a friendly visit, no doubt, but with an eye to their own interests. These worthy people would not be thoroughbred Arabs had they failed to ask with eager emulation for bakhshish upon bakhshish: I present each of them with a hundred piastres beyond his engagement, and with a grand flourish bestow the little trumpet-mouthed pistol on the Scheikh who was so desperately enamoured of it yesterday.

All the inhabitants of the encampment surround us with unaffected marks of regard, of which we are the more sensible as we have not until now been much accustomed to this sort of demonstration. Samet-Aly, in a moment of excited tenderness, makes a most unexpected proposal, by which I feel exceedingly touched, although a little startled at the same time. "We are all fond of thee," said he, "become our brother, and remain with us. Thou wilt be a Scheikh like ourselves; and thou wilt have the choice of three wives amongst the daughters of our tribe, for we shall forthwith adopt thee." I reply, without hesitation, that the honour proposed by the tribe is too great; that I feel I am not sufficiently worthy of it; and that, besides, imperious duties recall

me to my own country. The brave Bedouins are not in the least offended at my refusal, and shake me kindly by the hand, while they assure me again and again that they are very sorry indeed to part with me without a hope of ever seeing me again. "Allah, aâlem!" ("Allah only knows,") is my answer.

Before parting with the Beni-Sakhars, I recollect that I have a store of sewing needles intended as presents for Mesdames the Bedouines, not one of which has been yet distributed. If I wish to get rid of my needles here is an opportunity to dispose of them gracefully. I announce with a loud voice this act of intended generosity: in a twinkling I am surrounded by a host of females, of all ages and complexions—a choice collection for the study of a physiognomist,—which leads me to congratulate myself internally that I was allowed a negative voice in the proposal of the three wives. The pillage of the needles—for a pillage it was in reality—takes less time than I require for narrating it. It behoves us now to look to our clothes, for we have not even retained the means of mending a button.

Whilst I was engaged in this largess, a Bedouin, who was on an occasional visit with the tribe, had contrived to get himself severely bitten by a large dog in the tendon-Achilles. The poor fellow smiling, and uttering no expressions of pain, is stretched on his back, being unable to stand upon one leg. They entreat me to go to his assistance; but not being a surgeon I am at a loss what to do. I tell the friends of the sufferer to bathe the wound from time to time with salt and water, and drawing the lips together as well as I can I try to keep them closed with large patches of sticking plaister. I am

then most anxious to get on horseback and take my departure as fast as possible ; but my evil destiny is in the ascendant ; for scarcely am I rid of my man with the wounded leg when I stumble upon another afflicted by a more serious disease. This is an epileptic patient, who is writhing under the convulsions produced by his infirmity. It is true they do not ask me to cure him, but merely to state what I think of his disease. "Houa miedjnoun!" ("He is possessed by a devil!") I reply, and all present repeat in loud chorus "Thaieb!" (It is so.") For this lucky answer I am immediately set down as a most orthodox believer. As every one is of opinion that this man must be left in communication with his genie (*djin*), without further interference, I completely approve of this determination, which I put in practice myself without further delay. It seems inhuman to leave a fellow-creature in pain without trying to relieve him ; but let the reader place himself in our situation, and he may perhaps excuse my apparent want of feeling at such a moment. The dreaded Sabkhah is a few thousand yards before us : it must be crossed at all hazards ; and the thought, I frankly confess, operated as a check on our natural sympathy. Shall we be able to get through without being swallowed up, every man of us ? A nervous question, which I hasten to solve with as little delay as possible.

Everything is ready ; it is scarcely eight o'clock ; we are all mounted ; and now let us commence our march, with Heaven to speed us.

We first skirt the foot of the mountains, keeping at a distance from the thicket, which we intend crossing by as short a cut as possible. Our course is first due south,

until we are in a line with the encampment of the Ahouethats, with whom we passed one night on our preceding journey. Then we turn suddenly westward, and proceed at a good pace through the forest. We have soon reached the tents of these people, whose hospitality we distrust, from recent experience; but nearly all the banditti are out foraging for the last few days. They have gone to plunder the encampment of a hostile tribe at a considerable distance. We find only the women, children, and a few men left with the abandoned tents. Nobody accosts us, and we pass on rapidly, struggling through a road little better than a swamp. What will it change to a little farther on? The consideration is enough to make us seriously uneasy.

We have arrived without accident at the large border of reeds which still conceals the Sabkhah from our anxious view, and here our difficulties will evidently commence. We send our luggage in advance, and look on whilst our beasts of burthen disappear one after the other, followed by the moukris, whose habitual prudence is on this occasion more than usually conspicuous. Each man urges his beast in a separate direction, instead of following the track left by the preceding one. In consequence of this, several mules choose a road for themselves; and in less than ten minutes some have sunk in the mud, others have fallen over on their sides, owing to the loads having been badly fastened, and to the intervening reeds having dragged them round. The shouting and screaming, from ten different points at the same time, is enough to drive us mad; and we lose nearly half an hour waiting for the whole caravan to retrace its steps, and take footing on firmer ground.

At last, the entire band, men and beasts, has got back again without other damage. But we cannot repeat this perilous game, and must find another more practicable passage. We return a few hundred yards southward, in the hope that, by retreating from the shore, we may fall in with a less marshy soil. In a few minutes, the Scheikh Abou-Daouk announces that the spot we have come to is favourable ; he therefore leads the way into the reeds, and everybody follows him. Here the thicket is not so dense, and the reedy border is not so wide ; a few minutes suffice to bring us in front of the formidable Sabkhah.

Let the reader figure to himself a plain covered with melted snow, mixed up with mud, over which the glimmering rays of a pale-looking sun are dismally reflected. Such is the scene before us, extending nearly three leagues (nine miles) in every direction. Not a pebble, not a blade of grass, nothing but mud—uninterrupted mud. What has become of the rivers that we know we have to cross? We shall soon find them, but we shudder as we anticipate the experiment.

The Beni-Sakhar Scheikhs, like true Arabs, have accompanied us thus far ; it is evident that they have still one more crowning bakhshish in view. We have made up our minds to disappoint them, and take our leave with a farewell shake of the hand. As I am the leader of the caravan, the demand will be addressed to me ; and Mohammed, who understands what they meditate, suggests to me, by a simple wink of his eye, to push my horse into the Sabkhah ; being perfectly assured that not even the ardent longing for a bakhshish will induce our insatiable friends to risk their chargers and

persons on this treacherous ground. I understand the hint, and adopt it immediately, to the great disappointment of the Scheikhs, who, expecting a halt on this spot, had already alighted to be in readiness. As soon as I have penetrated a few yards into this horrid jungle, the Scheikhs resign the hopes they had fondly entertained, remount their horses, shout to us a last farewell, and then disappear in the reedy thicket.

We are now fairly quit of all our bloodsuckers, and commence marching in Indian file, adopting all the precautions so powerfully suggested by the aspect of the ground. These precautions are by no means superfluous, and we are obliged to be constantly on the look-out at every step in advance, if we have any hope, however slightly founded, of escaping with our lives from this treacherous "Slough of Despond." Abou-Daouk and his brother lead the way; and, to our great consolation, less with the air of a reconnoitring party than with the full confidence of guides thoroughly acquainted with the only practicable road.

In a few minutes we reach the first torrent—swollen, impetuous, and menacing. Having gained the bank, our infantry strip off their clothes, and plunge boldly into the water: the instinct of wandering savages has discovered to them a ford which they cross at a spot where the water reaches only to their arm-pits. They are followed by the horsemen; and at this critical moment every one of us is intent on his own safety, without bestowing much attention on the passage of the mules and moukris. All arrive safely on the opposite bank, delighted to have passed the first important difficulty; but our beasts of burden are still in the rear, and we feel somewhat anxious

when thinking of the probable effect of so violent a current on the heavy masses of our luggage.

Whilst the more intelligent of our animals keep following the same track, and crossing the torrent at exactly the same spot, a miserable donkey, loaded with a sack of barley, laid in as provision for our horses, finds it more in accordance with his own judgment to take a short cut at the nearest point. He misses the ford by doggedly turning his back upon it ; the consequence is, he slips in, and immediately loses his footing, plunging and struggling desperately against the current which carries him down. Our first conviction is, that he is inevitably lost. But in coming to this conclusion, if we had correctly estimated the stupid apathy of our moukris we had forgotten to take into account the devoted energy of our Bedouins. In a moment, these men of iron muscles, holding each other by the hand, form a kind of arched buttress, with their feet planted deep in the muddy bank, into which they sink above the knees ; those who constitute the other extremity of this human chain descend into the torrent, and catch at the miserable donkey by the ears, the tail, and the sack fixed upon his back. The creature has not strength enough left to assist the endeavours of those who try to rescue it, by the slightest movement. It is evidently paralysed by terror ; and yet, in a few minutes, notwithstanding the looseness of the bank, which gives way several times, throwing back men and beast into the water, the animal is at last hauled up, half dead, upon the dry land. They set it on its legs again with much difficulty, after having taken off the load, rendered three times heavier by the water with which it is saturated, and which the unlucky donkey is no longer able to

carry. Immediately after this feat, our friends of the desert, still holding each other by the hand, and in token of their joy at having succeeded, commence dancing in a circle, singing at the same time a strange chorus. I shall not readily forget this characteristic and exciting exhibition.

After this short delay, we resume our march; but Abou-Daouk has gained ground during the few minutes that we have been involuntarily compelled to lose. We observe that he shifts and turns at almost every step, no doubt to avoid dangerous bogs; but how are we to hit his track? Scarcely have his horse's hoofs emerged from this glutinous soil, when the impression they have left is closed again, and choked up with water. We must trust entirely to the help of Providence as we venture after him.

In a few moments every one is taking care of himself, seeking a separate path, and trying to discover spots upon which he may venture, calculating, at the same time, how many chances are in favour of his being swallowed up in some quagmire, from which there will be no deliverance. Edward and Philippe remain close behind me, determined to share the same fate with myself, and sink or escape together.

At this moment I hear distant cries; they proceed from our ill-fated donkey, who has fallen again, quite exhausted, in the mud, and is suffocated there in a moment. We proceed on our march, abandoning the carcass. A quarter of an hour after, one of our luggage horses disappears in the mire, and perishes also beyond all power of extrication. We lose much valuable time in unloading the dead body, for we cannot afford to abandon moveables of much importance.

We have now half crossed the Sabkhah, and begin to feel a little more confidence, notwithstanding our apprehensions of the remaining watercourses, more dangerous than that we have already crossed, and which we speedily expect to find intercepting our road. Every moment, mules or horses are slipping and falling down, and we become perfectly furious at the apathy displayed by our moukris at the dangers to which the beasts of their companions are exposed. Once even, one of these, a man called Aly, whom we have brought from Beyrout, obstinately refuses to go to the assistance of one of his comrades ; it is only by exhibiting the muzzle of a pistol that I induce him to do what he most certainly would have wished to have had done for himself, had he been similarly situated.

For a moment I thought myself lost, and my blood ran cold in my veins. I felt my horse's hind legs suddenly sinking under me ; he went down about two feet, and it was only by a desperate effort, by dint of holding him up with all my strength, and striking him furiously with the whip, that I contrived to make him leap beyond this hole. Edward and Philippe had seen my distress, and were running up to my assistance ; but fortunately by the time they arrived the danger was already passed.

The reader will easily conceive that from this moment my apprehensions, which had nearly vanished, returned with greater strength than ever.

Fortunately, by the time we reach the bank of the nearest of the rivers that still remain to be crossed, we discover, to our unutterable joy, that the rain which has so cruelly annoyed us for the last two days, has not spread beyond the eastern shore of the Dead Sea ; and

that the torrents coming down from the mountains of the western coast, as well as from those that form to the southward the limit of the Sabkhah, are not swollen in the least; far from that, it seems as if these torrents had become considerably smaller than when we crossed them on our first passage. At present it is mere child's play, and we reach without difficulty the broken shore that forms the foot of the mountain of Sodom. Here we breathe freely; and here, from the bottom of our hearts thank Providence for the evident protection that has been accorded to us. We were exposed to perish in this horrid quagmire, and we have escaped with the loss of a single horse and a miserable donkey drowned: a reasonable tribute to the dominion of the Sabkhah.

After what we have gone through for the last few hours, the reader will understand that we greatly needed, all of us, men and beasts, a halt to recover strength, and calm down our excitement. Every one jumps from his horse, and stretches himself on the salt gravel composing the light, moveable soil which by good fortune we have reached at last. We take advantage of this halt to breakfast, and I need scarcely say with what childish joy we quaff a bumper of arrack and cold water to our beloved native country, which we now confidently hope to see again, and to the success of our adventurous journey.

Our poor friends, the Bedouins of our escort, are as merry as ourselves. They have resumed their light undress, and have bathed in the last river we crossed, to get rid of the innumerable contributions of slimy mud adhering to their bodies, acquired by running right and left to the assistance of everybody; and more especially when falling at almost every step on this glutinous mire

upon which you can only obtain a firm footing by sinking deeply into it. One of our Thâameras, a fine noble specimen of the wild Arab, as faithful as our trusty Ahouad, and who might stand as a model before any sculptor for the statue of a hero, is suddenly seized with violent cramps in the stomach, which, in a moment, so distort his features, that he looks like a dying man. A brother of the tribe rubs him with all his might on the back and chest, but with no effect. This poor fellow is broken down with fatigue and suffering. I am immediately summoned to his assistance, and find him writhing on the shore in an agony of pain. Being at a loss how to proceed, I think, as a preliminary, of making him swallow half a glass of arrack. He has never tasted this fermented liquor in his life, and I expect the novelty will so astonish the stomach of my Bedouin that the cramps will be removed at once. I produce the arrack I propose to give him ; but his scruples as a true Mussulman believer interfere, and he pushes back the glass. I have then but one recourse, namely, to send for the khatib and tell him to persuade our friend that what I want him to take is a medicinal potion and nothing else. The khatib insists upon this argument ; our Bedouin then makes up his mind to act accordingly, and swallows the brandy, making something of a wry mouth at first; but after a few seconds he is quite surprised to find himself completely cured. He stands up smiling, and begins to walk about with the same honest and laughing countenance he had before. Thank Heaven, we are thus delivered from a serious anxiety.

Next appears, introduced by Matteo, one of our moukris, all sobs and tears ; he is the owner of the horse that has just been drowned in the mud. I present him, on the

public account, with an indemnity of a hundred piastres; and the poor devil looks up also, in his turn, with a merry face—a cheap rate at which to dispense happiness. We add a general gratuity of two hundred piastres, to be equally divided amongst our attendants, thus imparting additional cheerfulness to the hearts of all, and causing a speedy oblivion of the fatigues and terrors of the Sabkhah.

Soon after mid-day we remount our horses, and proceed, coasting again the foot of the Salt Mountain, or Djebel-Esdoum. We retrace our steps in front of the cave where we halted a few days before, to breakfast, and we find the entrance nearly blocked up by huge masses of salt that have rolled down to the foot of the mountain, having been detached by the late rains. Similar masses present themselves to us throughout nearly the whole extent of the mountain, and these new crumblings give a strange appearance to the steep rocks. When looking at some of these needles of salt, recently insulated, I am not surprised that Captain Lynch should have taken one of them for what he has called the salt-pillar into which Lot's wife was transformed. I regret much that this intelligent American officer did not happen to examine the Salt Mountain on two different occasions, and in the rainy season; he would then have found a hundred Lot's wives instead of one.

The level of the sea seems to have risen a little during the time that has passed since we were here before; for the water's edge, properly speaking, has visibly drawn nearer the foot of the mountain. It is true the coast is so flat at this point that an increase of half a yard in the height of the water must carry the margin of the shore

more than a hundred yards beyond its original limit. The consequence of this increase is, that the ground we march upon is much more difficult of passage than at the period of our former visit.

Forty-six minutes past two have arrived, when we find ourselves again precisely in front (and ten yards distant on the left), of the collection of ruins bearing the name of Redjom-el-Mezorrhel. The water's edge is scarcely forty or fifty yards to our right, whilst the foot of the mountain is only thirty yards from the road we are following. When we reach the Redjom-el-Mezorrhel we are marching north by west. By fifty-two minutes past two we turn west-north-west. The sea is then eighty yards off, and the foot of the mountain distant one hundred and fifty yards. The shore, having thus become wider, exposes to our view large blocks of stone, worn by time, and in the midst of them we soon distinguish regular rows, being the foundations of ancient walls. We are now unquestionably in the midst of ruins, apparent and distinguishable, covering a space of nearly four hundred yards in extent. Our course at this time is north-north-west. To our right is a sandy beach, and before us the thicket of bushes or dwarf trees, into which our companions had incautiously ventured, in search of game, on our former journey.

To our left the Djebel-Esdoum has ceased to form a single mass, and we have arrived in front of the vast excrescences, or projecting hillocks, bordering the northern point of this mountain. On these hillocks, which present an extensive surface, disjointed accumulations appear, exhibiting positive and infallible evidence of the existence, on this point, of a very considerable town. We wind

closely round the foot of these ruins, so that it is impossible to mistake their origin. By three o'clock the thicket of trees concealing the view of the sea, is eighty yards off, to our right. Our course is now north-north-west.

By seven minutes past three we cross the dry bed of a torrent, fifteen yards wide. Here the hillocks covered with ruins are divided by a ravine, and form two distinct masses, bearing on their surface the immense fragments which the Arabs accompanying us are unanimous in calling Esdoum (Sodom). In the plain itself, beyond the bed of the torrent I have just mentioned, appear numerous lines of stone blocks, remains of the primæval habitations. By eleven minutes past three we march west-north-west, starting from the spot where the ruins heaped upon the plain cease to appear. We then keep constantly following the same direction, whilst the delta upon which our road is traced has become a vast plain, intersected by many ravines, strewed with large rolled blocks, and planted with a vast number of mimosas, or acacias.

By a quarter-past three, we are opposite the extreme point of the Djebel-Esdoum, which ends in a perpendicular steep commanding a large and beautiful plain, planted with mimosas, and spreading to a considerable distance in a south-south-west direction.

By half-past three we reach the foot of the first hillocks, about thirty yards in height, flanking the mouth of the Ouad-ez-Zouera, and begin the ascent of this ouad immediately after, directing our course at first due west. Upon the level crests of the two hillocks I have just mentioned, are very numerous ruins, of the same description as those of Aÿn-Djedy, Esdoum, En-Nemaïreh, and

Sebâan. Amongst the Arabs, these ruins are called Zouera-et-Tahtah. They are therefore the ruins of the Zoar that succeeded the Zoar of the Scriptures, and on the same site.

It has been stated that we passed the limits of the ruins of Sodom by eleven minutes past three; we reach the ruins of Zoar, or Segor, by thirty minutes past three. It has thus taken us nineteen minutes to pass from the one place to the other, which implies that the distance between them is somewhat less than two thousand yards, or a mile and a quarter according to English measurement. I was then perfectly justified in affirming at an earlier page, that the relative situation of the ruins of Sodom and Zoar exactly corresponded with, and confirmed all the circumstances of the narrative transmitted to us by the Bible, of the flight of Lot; this flight having been accomplished within the interval of time between the first break of day and the full rise of the sun.

By thirty-four minutes past three we are marching due west, and passing along the foot of the hills forming the right bank of the deeply-ravined bed of the torrent which has hollowed out the Ouad-ez-Zouera. This bed has in some places a breadth of about a hundred yards, but in others it becomes exceedingly narrow. Beyond and above the hills on the left, we descry the summit of the Djebel-Esdoum, which seems to be at the distance of about four thousand yards. We keep marching on at a distance of some fifteen yards from the steep acclivities forming the bed of the ouad. Just then we perceive, on our right, a huge subverted cone, exactly resembling the crater of an extinct volcano.

No description can adequately express the desolate

aspect of the Ouad-ez-Zouera. On all sides nothing is to be seen but immense chasms, rocks violently torn from their original masses, and hurled down into the bottom of the ouad; perpendicular cliffs, of a soft crumbling stone which looks like volcanic ashes, but which is in reality nothing but a kind of sand of the same description as that of the hillocks of Sebbeh and of the peninsula of El-Lisan. After having followed, for a long time, the bank of the bed of the ouad, which is about thirty yards below our road, and planted, here and there, with large acacias, thinly scattered, we descend into the bed itself, and proceed along it for a considerable distance further. By forty-nine minutes past three we pass, on our left, a dark-coloured mountain, that looks as if it had been calcined by intense fire, and which commands, from a lofty elevation, the deeply-hollowed ouad through which we are proceeding. To our right we observe masses of the same broken rocks, similar in height and appearance. We seem, as it were, to be enclosed within two lofty walls, higher than the eye can reach, and separated by a defile scarcely exceeding one hundred yards in width. Our course for some minutes has scarcely deviated from west-north-west. By fifty-five minutes past three we find ourselves in front of an enormous bifurcation of the ouad. The right branch has no outlet, and penetrates two or three hundred yards westward, into the bosom of the calcareous rocks; the left branch is the actual continuation of the Ouad-ez-Zouera, and turns to the south-south-west. This is the track by which we shall proceed to-morrow to the upper country. To-day we have determined to encamp in the recess on the right, which is called En-Nedjd (the high cliff). There on a small rocky ledge, appear the ruins of a very ancient

structure. At the foot of this ledge our tents are pitched. A little nearer to the entrance of the Nedjd, is hollowed out, on the side of the mountain, a very elevated cavern, but of no great extent, where our Scheikhs establish themselves with their followers. We halted at exactly three minutes to four.

During our march through the Ouad-ez-Zouera, and when we had attained a point above the level of the Dead Sea, sufficiently elevated, we were singularly fortunate in being present at a spectacle few men can hope to witness twice in their lives, and which demands a passing comment. We may almost say that we saw the catastrophe of the Pentapolis, and are still under the strong impression of the scene that we gazed on with the most intense excitement.

As we were laboriously pursuing our way between the Djebel-Esdoum and the sea, a storm, that had come down from the mountains of Canaan, burst exactly over the Asphaltitic Lake, at about the meridian of Masada and of the peninsula of El-Lisan. Dark-grey clouds had united the sea and sky, concealing in utter darkness all the northern part of this deep valley. Suddenly, a splendid rainbow, of dazzling brightness and richly variegated colours, appeared to form a gigantic archway, thrown by the hand of the Almighty between the two opposite shores of the Dead Sea. The reader may fancy how much we were moved by the magnificence of this natural phenomenon; but it was nothing compared with what was reserved for us towards the end of the same day.

When we began ascending the first acclivities of the Ouad-ez-Zouera, large black clouds, driven by the westerly wind, passing above our heads and over the Djebel-Esdoum,

rushed down upon the Dead Sea, in the direction of the Rhôr-Safieh, then rising again along the flank of the mountains of Moab, soon cleared the view and allowed us to contemplate the expanse of water, resembling a vast motionless sheet of molten lead. By degrees, as the storm hurried towards the east, the western sky became again pure and radiant; then for a moment, the setting sun darted above the mountains of Canaan fiery rays, which seemed almost to cover the summits of the land of Moab with the flames of an enormous conflagration, while the bases of those imposing mountains remained as black as ink. Above was the dark lowering sky; below, the sea, like a metallic sheet of dull leaden grey; around us, the silence of the desert, and utter desolation. Afar off, in the west, a bright, cloudless sky, shining over a blessed land, whilst we seemed to be flying from a country condemned for ever.

It is impossible to describe this scene, which, to be fully understood and felt, must have been witnessed. Our Bedouins, themselves, though accustomed to the grandest operations of Nature, participated in the sensations by which we were completely mastered, "Chouf, ia-sidy," they exclaimed to me; "chouf! Allah yedrob Esdoum!" ("See, sir, see! Allah is smiting Sodom!") and they were right. The tremendous spectacle which was witnessed by Lot, from nearly the same spot where we were now standing, must have borne a striking resemblance to the magnificent repetition with which we had just been favoured by the same presiding Providence.

Our good fortune in having escaped with safety out of the hands of the Bedouins of Moab, and the Scheikh of Karak, and above all from the perils of the Sabkhah; our

joy at having discovered the ruins of Sodom, and at having beheld a sight which recalled the destruction of the Pentapolis, furnished ample subjects for our evening's conversation under the tents. Most agreeable was it to review, in order, in our memories, all the episodes of our adventurous excursion, and to repeat to each other, whilst enjoying the double fragrance of the djebely and the moka (tobacco and coffee), that the real dangers of our undertaking were now over, and that it only remained for us to enjoy, in security, the result of our discoveries and the fruits of our persevering labour.

Rothschild, who had no map to complete, by line, rule, and compass, and no note-book to fill up, boldly ventured alone into the midst of the ruins of Sodom, and traversed their entire extent, at the risk of encountering some dangerous accident. When I observed him imprudently committing himself upon this unsafe ground, I hastened to send two of our Djahalins in pursuit of him, commanding them besides to look amongst the ruins, and bring away, if possible, some fragment of pottery. On our arrival at the Nedjd, they confidently presented me with the remains of a jar, but evidently of modern construction, which they had picked up, Heaven knows when and where. This grand discovery procured them at the moment a few piastres ; but I soon got rid of the pseudo-relic by throwing it amongst the rocks upon which we are encamped.

There is every reason to suppose that the Ouad-ez-Zouera is precisely the pass or Ascent of the Scorpions mentioned in Holy Writ. For my own part, I am satisfied on the subject ; and at all events I can attest that the Ouad-ez-Zouera is in every respect entitled to that

denomination. You cannot turn over a single pebble in the Nedjd, without finding under it one of these unpopular animals. They stroll even into our tent, when disturbed from their accustomed hiding-places. The proverb says "habit is second nature," and says so with good reason. A month ago, the sight of a scorpion powerfully affected my nervous system; to-day the apparition of one of these creatures, even when unexpected, has ceased to cause the slightest emotion; I merely tread upon it with perfect composure. By this I mean to convey, that without having acquired a greater liking for scorpions, I have ceased to be afraid of them.

Our night has been delightful, and we composed ourselves to sleep with the pleasing recollection of the happy issue of our adventurous voyage of discovery.

January 23rd.

This morning we had no occasion to urge our forces to activity, every man was ready by dawn; and we ourselves, who ought to have set the first example, were the only sluggards to delay the departure of the caravan. It is true that I adhere to my plan never to give the order to move until we have taken our early breakfast; a frugal repast most certainly, but still indispensable, if we wish to sustain with greater ease the fatigue of travelling and the evil influences of the climate.

By seven o'clock we were on the march, and retracing our steps, entered once more upon the Ouad-ez-Zouera, which we had deviated from the day before, for the purpose of encamping at the Nedjd. As soon as we have gained the ouad, which is not more than forty or fifty yards wide, and still commanded to the right by an immense conical hill of yellowish sand, and to the left by broken

perpendicular rocks, we march westward by north. Almost immediately after, two huge conical sand-hills appear to the left of the ouad, whilst a large dark rock, of the same description as that which we had passed a moment before to our left, stands out in bold relief, to our right, on the sand-hills. The rocks, forming the bottom of the ouad, are covered, as we have had already occasion to observe, with a kind of crust composed of a conglomerate of small rolled fragments, cemented into a calcareous paste, which has moulded itself according to the angles and cavities of these rocks. Is this compound an alluvial or a volcanic production? The question I leave to the decision of professed geologists. During several minutes we keep ascending, and by twelve minutes past seven we reach a mediæval ruin, known to the Arabs by the name of Qasr-ez-Zouera, or of Zouera-el-Fouqah (the upper Zoar). This interesting ruin has been already described by Messrs. Irby and Mangles, and at a much later period by M. de Berton; but, as ruins of this kind are rarely visited, I scarcely suppose I shall tire the patience of my readers in giving them, as succinctly as possible, an idea of the buildings accumulated at this point of the Ouad-ez-Zouera.

The difficult road we have been following, runs along the left flank of a very steep, conical, calcareous hill, the upper level of which is occupied by fortifications well laid out, so as to command the whole pass through the Ouad-ez-Zouera. On the eastern point of the conical hill is a small square fort, commanding the portion of the road leading up from the shore of the Dead Sea. A short distance behind this fort, to the westward, and upon a mound several yards high, is another defensive

enclosure, much more considerable. This is a kind of pentagon, the eastern face of which comprises a curtain flanked by two round towers; the tower on the right, or northern face, is in ruins, whilst the one on the left is still in a fair state of preservation. The western face presents a salient angle, ending in a round tower that commands the entire ascent, which, after winding round the base of the hill, leads up to the higher country.

To the south of this principal structure, and on the same level with the small square fort I have mentioned first, are still standing two high walls of a building, which must have been originally square, having on its western face an ogival gate, still in good repair, but without any ornament; and on its southern face, as well as I can recollect, two bay windows. All these constructions are in hewn stone, of a whitish colour, regularly cut and fitted, but of small dimensions. In front of this building is a well, excavated in the rock.

To the left of the road, and nearly opposite the small square fort, is a very high rock, in which a cavern has been hollowed, at a considerable elevation, with openings or windows, resembling embrasures, looking towards the road, and disposed so as to flank it with a cross fire of the projectiles, whatever may have been their nature, which were prepared for intercepting, in case of need, the access to the upper level. Beyond this cliff, at the foot of which a fine quadrangular cistern is hollowed in the rocks, a steep ravine ascends towards the south-west, leading most probably to the cave I have just mentioned.

The right peak of the ravine is formed by a huge rock, at the foot of which is hewn, in front of the

Qasr, a second square cistern, in very good repair, but containing only a small quantity of muddy water. The road passes to the left of this cistern, and is encumbered by several heaps of rubbish; indications, although at present undistinguishable, of habitations, or, what is more likely, of inferior military works, intended as outposts.

The ascent is very steep, and soon reaches a point where a succession of frequent and short zigzags commences. At this point two heaps of ruins, situated the one to the right, the other to the left of the ascent, are distinguishable, from their disposition itself, as having been two advanced posts. About half way up the corkscrew ascent, which is cut in the flanks of a very hard dark-coloured rock, the path is interrupted by three ruined walls, which, in all probability, were perforated by openings, sufficiently wide to allow a passage for loaded camels.

Twenty-four minutes past seven have arrived, when we reach the last zigzag on the ascending path taking us up to a small inclined plain, where we allow our horses to breathe for three minutes. Here the road still tending in a due-westerly direction, is flanked on the left by a wall in ruins. A little higher up again, by thirty-one minutes past seven, we scramble over the ruins of two other walls barring the passage. Here the road becomes broken by loose stones, and turns sharply towards the north-north-west.

We have now attained an upper plain, everywhere covered with heaps of pebbles, which seem to have been violently thrown together by some volcanic process. To our right, running parallel with the line we are following,

is a steep and wide ravine, appearing also, as we view it from a distance, to be hollowed to a considerable depth.

On this plain, which scarcely exhibits a blade of grass, I perceive from my saddle a kind of flower, having some resemblance to a large, dried, Easter daisy (*Páquerette*); it is quite open, well displayed upon the soil, and looks as if it was alive. On alighting to examine it more closely, I distinguish a plant of the radiated family, but without leaves or petals; in a word, the plant is quite dead; how long it has remained in this state, it is impossible to guess. It retains a kind of fantastic existence. I gather a few samples, which I place in my holsters, these having for a long time ceased to be a receptacle for fire-arms, and being daily crammed with stones and plants.

Another word respecting this extraordinary plant. In the evening, when I happened to empty my holsters, I was quite surprised to find the dead flowers closed up, and as dry and hard as if they were made of wood. I then recognised a small flower, with a long tap-root, which I had never seen alive, but had already picked up at the place where we halted to breakfast on our descent to Aÿn-Djedy. What prevented me from ascertaining this identity at first sight was, that one sample was gathered in a state of moisture, while the other was picked up perfectly dry. It was then quite clear that this ligneous and exceedingly tough vegetable possessed peculiar properties, which developed themselves hygrometrically, with the corresponding changes of the soil and atmosphere. I immediately tried the experiment, and discovered that the Kaff-Maryam, the Rose of Jericho of the pilgrims (*Anastatica hierichuntica*) so celebrated for the same faculty, was

not to be compared to my recent discovery. A Kaff-Maryam, placed in water, takes an hour and a half before it is entirely open ; whilst in the case of my little flower I watched it visibly expanding, and, without exaggeration, the change was complete in less than three minutes.

I then recollected the heraldic bearing called the Rose of Jericho, which is emblazoned on some escutcheons, dating from the time of the Crusades ; and I became convinced that I had discovered the real Rose of Jericho, long lost sight of after the fall of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and replaced by the *Anastatica*, or Kaff-Maryam ; which a Mussulman tradition, accepted by Christians, pointed out to the piety of the early pilgrims, who inquired from the inhabitants of the country what was the plant of the plain of Jericho that never died, and came to life again as soon as it was dipped in water.

Under any circumstances, this singular hygrometric vegetable constitutes an entirely new genus for botanists, judging by what we know of it, that is to say, by its skeleton. My friend, the Abbé Michon, has undertaken to describe this curious plant, and has paid me the compliment of naming it *Saulcya hierichuntica*. Unquestionably, the honour is all on my side.

I return now to my diary.

Close upon eight o'clock we reach, by a few winding paths, a rocky ledge, where the pebbles seem to have been grilled, and come upon a plain of small extent. Since we have gained the crest bordering the plain, we march almost invariably to the north-west. By five minutes past eight we descry, ten yards distant to our left, a heap of ruins, resembling the remains of a round tower. At

this spot commences the elevated flat called Ras-ez-Zouera. The large ravine we have pointed out before has drawn nearer to our road on the right. For the last ten minutes it had been concealed by hillocks, and two considerable mounds of pebbles; the summits of these latter bearing in an east-south-east direction.

By ten minutes past eight we are pointing to the north-west, over a small plain, commanded, three hundred yards off to our right, by a range of high hills, and eight hundred yards off, to our left, by a lofty calcareous mountain, the foot of which is bordered by hillocks of a greyish sand, formed into compact rocks. Towards the summit of the mountain, on the left, a square grotto is visible, evidently constructed by human labour. At a quarter-past eight, we go down by a slight descent upon another small plain, dotted with mounds; to the left of this plain rise, about six hundred yards off, some very high hillocks. In regard to this tract of country, it scarcely deserves the name of plain, beyond an extent of four hundred yards in width at the utmost. It still continues to bear the appellation of Ras-ez-Zouera.

By half-past eight, our distance from the foot of the hills on the left is only about fifty yards. By thirty-four minutes past eight we are precisely in front of the summit of a high hill of compact sand, and one minute later we cross a ravine coming from the south-west. Beyond is a small plain, that spreads out six hundred yards to our left, and then narrows again by forty minutes past eight, so as to leave only a breadth of sixty yards to our left, and a hundred yards to our right, down to the foot of a high hill, masking the one whose summit I noticed just

before. On this side of the ravine, which we have crossed by thirty-five minutes past eight, transported fragments of volcanic ejections begin to appear again. By forty minutes past eight we cross another ravine, and enter a new ouad, rather narrow, bearing the name of Ouad-et-Thâemeh. Our course is now west by north. Up to forty-seven minutes past eight, we are crossing a small plain, four hundred yards wide at the utmost, commanded on all sides by sandy hillocks ; the ouad then becomes a mere defile, very deep and narrow, through which our course lies north-north-west. We observe here huge accumulations of lava. Two thousand yards off to our left, we notice the summit of a high mountain, and soon issue upon a small, flat space, about two hundred and fifty yards in diameter.

By fifty-five minutes past eight our road becomes straight again, and keeps ascending along the Ouad-et-Thâemeh, in a north-westerly direction. We have now on our left a line of hills, distant about thirty or forty yards from our road, whilst the hills on our right are, generally speaking, about one hundred yards from us. By nine o'clock we reach and cross a ravine, beyond which two Arab tombs appear, consisting as usual of heaps of stones piled up by the hand of man. The ravine which we have just crossed makes an elbow on our left, whilst we are marching due north, so as to near very rapidly the road we are following, and to cut it in two other places. The ravine is then very narrow, and our path lies along the bottom of its bed. By eight minutes past nine it inclines to the north-west, and at this point we observe in the rocks by which we are passing, many considerable veins of a violet, green, and

yellow hue, produced by the presence of copper and manganese, between the layers of the calcareous masses.

By twelve minutes past nine our route is due west, and the cliffs confine within constantly narrowing limits the ravine through which we are moving. The rocks divided by this ravine present fine red and yellow masses, the colours of which are certainly owing to the metallic salts I have indicated above. Lastly, by twenty-two minutes past nine, we climb a small, steep ascent, between two violet-coloured rocks that look as if they had been roasted, and scarcely allow a width of a few yards for the passage. This strange spot, where the effects of volcanic eruption are palpably defined, is called Souq-et-Thâemeh (the market-place of Et-Thâemeh.)

The name of Et-Thâemeh, which has struck upon our ears for the last half-hour, joined to the designation of a market, surprised us not a little. I question Abou-Daouk and Hamdan on their etymology, who both tell me that there existed formerly on this spot the market-place of a city destroyed by fire from Heaven, sent by the vengeance of Allah. This city was called Et-Thâemeh, and we are precisely on the site of the market that was held there. Between Et-Thâemeh and Admah the difference in sound is not so great but that I feel greatly tempted to believe myself on the site of one of the towns of the doomed Pentapolis.* Are there to be discovered on the neighbouring hills any vestiges of this city? My guides positively affirm that there are. As to verifying the fact myself, buried as I am between two steep rocks, I am unable to do so. I can only affirm, that either before or

* The pronunciation of the Arab word, *et-Thâemeh*, is exactly the same as that of *Admah* in either the French or English languages.—TRANSLATOR.

after the Souq-et-Thâemeh, I saw nothing that could enable me to surmise the existence of an ancient city in these districts, so deeply impressed by volcanic agencies.

By twenty-five minutes past nine the Ouad-et-Thâemeh suddenly widens, and a large and deep ravine borders it eighty yards off on our left. We are then marching in a north-westerly direction, between two lines of hills. By twenty-nine minutes past nine we cross the ravine we had discovered some minutes before, and by thirty-two minutes past nine we have, fifty yards distant to our left, an elevated hill commanded by a very perceptible ruin.

For the last half-hour, the sky had become dark, and from time to time drops of rain had made my topographical labours exceedingly difficult. At this moment the rain becomes so thick and icy cold, that notwithstanding my zeal I find myself compelled to give up laying down a map of the country. The sky is obscured on all sides; the bad weather is not likely to leave us throughout the day, and I am in despair when I reflect that the work I have carried on with such perseverance is now interrupted. My temper gives way under this unexpected disappointment, and I declaim loudly against the rain, that has chilled my fingers so that I can neither hold pencil nor compass, and less than either, my memorandum-book, which would soon be wet through, and occasion the loss of my former labour.

We continue on our way, in almost total darkness, through a very broken country, and pelted by incessant torrents of rain. Hail soon comes in to reinforce the tempest, and beats so furiously against our faces that we are at a loss how to screen ourselves from the painful effects of the large bullets discharged in constant volleys.

Even our poor horses refuse to proceed under this rude squall, and turn their backs to it without our permission, so as to receive upon their haunches the tremendous attack which had before assailed them in front. During an interval of several minutes, men and beasts expose themselves to the storm, waiting anxiously for the moment when its fury may relent.

Our Scheikhs, not more inclined to bear it than ourselves, and caring very little what may become of us, go in quest of a refuge they are well acquainted with, and without apprising us of its existence. Thus, when the hail ceases, to give place to the rain alone, we have no guides, excepting our poor Ahouad, who has never left us for a moment. At his suggestion, we resume our march as quickly as we can, through flat tracts of land inundated with water, and arrive, after a quarter of an hour, at the bottom of a shallow ravine, leading to a spacious cavern, where our escort has found a shelter. The weather seems to clear up a little; and, disgusted as I am by the storm we have just endured, and the forced interruption of my topographical labours, I reject sulkily the proposal of Abou-Daouk to halt in this grotto and spend there the remainder of the day and the night.

What should we gain by so doing? Probably a repetition of the same weather for to-morrow. Besides, we have here neither wood nor water. Then how are we to remain and spend twenty-four hours in this repulsive cavern? Notwithstanding the strong inclination of all our people, who would much prefer to stay here and dry themselves as well as they could, I give orders to proceed with the march, still fondly hoping that we may reach Hebron in the evening, although our Arabs unanimously

affirm that the thing is impracticable. I remain immoveable, and once more give the signal for departure. However, as a thorough wetting on an empty stomach is by no means comfortable, I keep back Matteo and Ahouad with us, and we breakfast at the bottom of the ravine, a little to the southward of the cave.

I then learn that this country is called Belad-er-Ramaïl. Antique barriers, made of large stones, everywhere intersect the ravine, and very distinguishable ruins are scattered all around. We are assuredly on the site of a town contemporary with the scriptural ages. What town can this have been? I am unable to divine; and the modern name (Er-Ramaïl) of the locality, does not, to my great regret, awaken any recollection upon which I might have recourse to some text from the Sacred authorities.

Let me, nevertheless, venture an hypothesis. We find in Eusebius (*ad vocem* Αραμὰ), the following phrase: Κώμη ἀπὸ τετάρτου σημείου Μαλααθὶ, τῆς δὲ χεβρῶν ἀπὸ εἴκοσι, "Arama is a borough situated at the fourth mile-stone from Malatha,* and at the twentieth milestone from Hebron." If we compare this passage with another of the same work, where it is said that Thamara is a borough distant one day's march from Malatha, for those who are journeying from Hebron to Aïlah, we shall be almost tempted to look for the Arama of Eusebius in the Er-Ramaïl, where we have stopped to breakfast, surrounded by the ruins of a town which must have been an important one. But, I repeat it, I merely propose this identification with due reserve.

During our breakfast, which has only occupied a

* Malatha is certainly no other than the city named (מולדה) Moladah, in Joshua, xv. 26, xix. 2, and in 1 Chronicles, iv. 28.

quarter of an hour, the clouds have separated, and a pale sun has darted forth some cold rays to encourage us to resume our march with vigour. Our luggage is in advance, attended by our escort. Ahouad alone has refused to leave us. We start again, and emerging through the ruins, lying on a level with the ground of the valley of Er-Ramaïl, ascend a vast tract of land, entirely naked, but which seems to possess a soil that might be cultivated. From a distance we discover Abou-Daouk, who, feeling anxious lest we should delay too long in this country, which is far from safe, has stopped on the road to wait for us, and give us his protection. The fact is that we are now reaching the confines of the country lying under his all-powerful dominion, and with his single presence we may brave all the Bedouins who happen to be within ten leagues in any direction round us. Still the worthy Scheikh knows perfectly well that were we to trust entirely to the effect of our own imposing presence and amiable looks, the most virtuous of his subjects would scarcely resist the temptation of plundering us to the best of their abilities. Our friend is on the look out, and when we have come up to him, he entreats us to push on at a good pace, considering that our day's journey is far from finished, and that we have still some hours of marching before us, ere we arrive at a place with water and firewood suitable for our encampment.

I am simple enough to hint to him again that I wish to sleep this same evening in Hebron, but Abou-Daouk contents himself with laughing silently in my face, deeming it unnecessary to waste words in telling me that I may as readily expect to sleep in Jerusalem. Ahouad is more polite and more explicit:—"Thou hopest to reach

Hebron to-day," says he, "but I would advise thee to give up the idea; if thou canst determine to march without halting a minute, perhaps thou mayest arrive there to-morrow morning; but even then I assure thee that no time must be wasted on the way in picking up plants and *sarasir*" (this last word is the Arabic plural of the word *sarsour*, by which the Bedouins designate all descriptions of *scarabæi*, or beetles). On receiving this warning, I begin to admit the reluctant belief that the only shelter for the night will be a cold tent, soaked through with rain.

The plain we are crossing is strewed with delicious clusters of flowers, of a rosy white, belonging to the family of lilies, and most attractive to the eye. This flower is of the same size and shape as the autumnal meadow-saffron (*Colchique*), so common towards the end of September in the fields of our own country.

As the rain has compelled me to give up, by about ten o'clock, my survey of the ground; and as I have not been able to take any observation over a space of more than two leagues (six miles), I yield to the incipient laziness which whispers me, that I could no longer connect the localities I might reconnoitre now, with the immense extent of map I have laid down, without interruption, from Bethlehem to Souq-et-Thâemeh. Whether from indolence, fatigue, or impossibility, anticipated rather than experienced, I give up, henceforward, the completion of the map. I only think of finding, as soon as possible, a place of shelter to get rest and warmth, and to dry my drenched garments. But whenever traces of ruined cities present themselves before me, I feel a pang of remorse, and inquire anxiously the names of those ruins, whilst I note the exact time of their discovery. I thus hope to

prepare for future travellers, more favoured by the weather than I have been, certain data upon which to build an accurate survey of all these localities.

At twenty-seven minutes past eleven I observed to our left, distant about a thousand yards from the road, and on the summit of a hill, a ruin of imposing appearance, and bearing the name of Qasr-el-Adadah. In this it is easy to recognise a Biblical station, Adadah (עדעדה), which we find mentioned in Joshua (xv. 22), as amongst the cities forming the extreme southern frontier of the tribe of Judah. It thus appears that the name of this ancient town has been preserved without the slightest alteration, and that the situation of the modern Adadah corresponds exactly with the position of the Adadah of the Bible. As well as I can recollect, Qasr-el-Adadah is only at a short distance from Er-Ramaïl; but I am quite certain that we noticed this ruin before arriving at the vast cavern of Er-Ramaïl.

Whilst traversing throughout its whole extent the plain I have mentioned above, and where Abou-Daouk was waiting for us, we have fallen in with the sites of two other ancient stations. The first, discovered at a quarter past one, is called Kharbet-Esded; and the second, passed through by ten minutes after two, is known to the Bedouins under the name of Kharbet-Hezebeh. I am quite unable to identify these modern names with those of any ancient cities mentioned in passages quoted from either the sacred or profane writings. The book of Joshua (xix. 3) mentions, amongst the cities assigned to the tribe of Simeon, and detached from the southern territory of the tribe of Judah, a place called Azem, or Etsem (עצם). Can this be our Hezebeh? I leave the

proof of this identification to more daring inquirers, and content myself with merely pointing it out as a surmise.

During several hours we march along the vast plain already named. It is closed in at the horizon—that is to say, to the westward—by a range of mountains, or rather hills, apparently of no great height, and crowned with trees or thick bushes, forming a coppice, looking exactly like a close plantation of underwood. We reach the foot of this range of hills by a quarter past four. We have passed on our left, at a distance of about two or three thousand yards, and without being able to visit it, a rather important-looking ruined station, called by the Arabs El-Qeriteïn. Perhaps under this name is concealed an ancient denomination of Kiriathaïm. But the only Kiriathaïm mentioned in the Scriptures is a city that became an integral portion of the Land of Moab, and therefore not to be looked for at El-Qeriteïn. We find amongst the cities in the portion of land made over to the tribe of Judah, one called Kerioth-Hezron ; but, notwithstanding the apparent concordance as to situation, we must question the prudence of proposing the identification between the two places, ancient and modern.* Judging by the account of our Arabs, the ruins situated at El-Qeriteïn are very considerable, and denote at this point the former existence of an important town.

Leaving El-Qeriteïn to our left, we reach the bottom of a lovely little valley, irrigated by a rivulet which seems to flow at all seasons permanently, instead of being acci-

* Why so? The difference of pronunciation is not so great between Kerioth and El-Keriteïn ; and the analogy becomes still greater when we consider that the termination "eïn," often indicates the plural; thus, El-Keriteïn might be translated "the cities of Kerit."—(NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.)

dentally formed by the periodical rains. The bed of this running stream, besides being rather hollow, is planted with trees. The rivulet winds round a vast rocky cliff, on the sides of which are excavated several grottoes, and presenting over its entire surface evident signs of ancient habitations ; this place is called Djenbeh. Avenues of stones fixed on end, similar to those we have observed in Moab, give access to this level, coming down from the neighbouring hills, upon which are descried also numerous vestiges of buildings of a very remote antiquity, judging by the rudeness of their construction. On the summit of the hillock of Djenbeh is a kind of enclosure, formed by a wall of rocks, from one to two yards and upwards in height. Some of these rocks, detached from the mass, are disposed almost after the fashion of a Celtic or Druidical *Tolmen*, a fact which excited our intense surprise. The ground is strewed with fragments of red fluted pottery, of a very antique character. The caves of Djenbeh are used at the present day as stables by the wandering tribes who visit this district ; and we find there, to our great satisfaction, two or three Bedouins, with a flock of sheep. Here is a piece of good fortune, of which we hasten to take advantage.

The weather is dreadfully cold and damp ; our first object is to warm ourselves, and whilst our tents are being pitched, and our Scheikhs are making their own arrangements for themselves and followers, men and horses, in a cave situated at a few yards distance to the left of our encampment, my thoughts recur to the surest means of procuring promptly the wood necessary for our kitchen and for the bivouac fires. I summon Djahalins and Thâameras, and promise twenty piastres for the required

supply. Having so often alluded to the love of piastres inherent in the nature of Bedouins in general, I suppose I need scarcely mention the ardour—I ought rather to say the enthusiasm—with which my proposal is accepted. The whole band scatters like a covey of partridges; blows from yataghans resound on all sides, and in less than ten minutes we have twice as much wood as we require for the night. It is true the wood is green, and emits more smoke than fire; but nevertheless it will do to roast our sheep and warm ourselves a little; and campaigners must be satisfied without the luxuries of a palace.

CHAPTER XIV.

A gloomy evening.—Concluding adventure with Bedouins.—Disappointed thieves.—Cave of Adullam.—Departure of the Djahalins.—Ruins of Djenbeh.—Makkedah of Scripture.—Enormous ruins, and avenues of stones.—Ruins of Maon, Carmel, and Ziph.—Arrival at Hebron.—Origin and remote antiquity of Hebron.—The modern name, El-Khalil.—Curious relic of antiquity.—Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor.—Tanks of Solomon.—Arrival at Jerusalem.—Welcome news.—Hospitality of the Franciscan Convent.—Residence at Jerusalem.—Another expedition arranged.

Our evening passes less gaily than usual; we are harassed, chilled, and out of humour with a weather and atmosphere so different from what we have enjoyed for twenty days in the warm valley of the Dead Sea: we think of nothing so much as getting a few hours' rest as soon as possible; and, consequently, when dinner, coffee, and tchibouks are despatched, all my companions immediately seek their cots; for myself I proceed to trace in Indian ink the small portion of the plan of the country which I have been able to survey in the morning, and then follow most willingly the good example they have set me. I retire to sleep, grumbling at the thought of my unfinished map, and consoling myself with having so far conducted our expedition to a successful end.

I must not omit to mention here the last of our Bedouin adventures, which occurred soon after we had cleared the pass of the Souq-et-Thâemeh. Before the merciless hail which so severely assaulted us, the rain had only fallen at intervals,

and without any other inconvenience than that of destroying my note-book if I continued my travelling memoranda. We were then passing through a hilly limestone tract. Since our departure from En-Nedjd, Abou-Daouk and Hamdan had never ceased urging us to hasten on, and keep in a compact mass, without yielding, no matter for what cause, to the temptation of straggling or extending our line of march. At a particular moment, we saw at the summit of a cliff, by the foot of which we were to pass, a Bedouin, in a crouching position, with his head resting upon his hands, and his elbows upon his knees. He was as immoveable as a statue, and we passed close to him, without his seeming to take the slightest notice of us.

No sooner were we well engaged in the difficult pass beyond the hill, where the fellow was certainly on the look-out, than he disappeared; and in a few minutes after we saw thirty truculent-looking figures issuing at the same time from all the neighbouring ravines, and marching towards us, carbine in hand. Abou-Daouk sprang forward to meet them, and addressed them in the following terms, which I repeat literally, without changing a syllable:—"Ya nas, fih lehm takalouhou, ouelakin fih lehm ma takalouhouch abadan." ("I say, you men, there is meat for your teeth, but there is also meat that will never do for your teeth.") This pithy address, or rather the dreaded voice of the illustrious Abou-Daouk, produced a magical effect. The thieves, who had hoped to plunder us, deemed it prudent to restrain their amiable aspirations; and after lavishing on the Scheikh of the Djahalins every mark of respect, they wheeled off, without the slightest mark of hesitation, down an inclined plane leading to the bottom of a frowning valley, where we descried some tents,

looking like black specks upon a plate of chalk. The attempt had failed: there was no playing tricks upon the high and mighty potentate who had done these bandits the honour of addressing them.

They did not take their departure, however, without carrying with them a slight memento of our passage. One of our moukris having lingered behind the caravan for a few moments on the road, was accosted by these hospitable strangers, who invited him to divide with them every article of personal wardrobe he carried upon his back—a characteristic specimen of the fraternity of the desert, little to the taste of the poor moukri, who rejoined his companions in haste, but equally ashamed and discontented.

The Arabs, who had for a moment entertained the hope of taking us by surprise, belonged to a tribe bearing the name of Adullam, a very antique appellation, which we find mentioned in the Bible, precisely under the same form (עדלם). Adullam was a city of the tribe of Judah,* situated in the plain. That the Arabs we have met derive their name from the Scriptural city seems unquestionable; but at the particular spot where we fell in with them, we were in the centre of the hilly region of the territory of Judah, and certainly the Adullam of the Bible could not have been situated there. Let us not forget, besides, that these are wandering tribes, carrying their name from place to place over large tracts of ground. Eusebius tells us that Adullam was a large hamlet, ten miles distant from Eleutheropolis, towards the east. Josephus speaks twice of Adullam. The first time,† on the occasion of David's taking refuge, when flying from Djitta, in the cavern situated near

* Joshua, xv. 35. † Ant. Jud. vi. xii. 3.

the town of Adullam, belonging to the tribe of Judah (προς Αδουλλάμη πολει). The second time,* when enumerating the fortified cities that were first constructed by Rehoboam, son of Solomon, in the territory of the tribe of Judah. The name of Adullam is written in this passage Οδολλαμ.

We have seen that Eusebius places that locality at a distance of ten miles from Eleutheropolis, in an easterly direction. St. Jerome states the distance to be twelve miles. Reland observes, with sound reasoning, that the town mentioned by Joshua, amongst the cities of the tribe of Judah, situated in the plain, cannot possibly be identified with that which Eusebius places eastward, and at a distance of ten miles from Eleutheropolis, because the point thus explicitly laid down happens to be necessarily in the mountains, and not in the plain of Judah. Have there been two distinct localities, each called Adullam? This seems to be the most obvious conclusion. If so, it would be most singular if one of the two had existed somewhere about the spot where we encountered the Arabs of the tribe of Adullam, and if the extensive cave of Er-Ramaïl should happen to be the very cave where David took refuge, and from which he proceeded towards the King of Moab, to seek an asylum for his family. But these are mere surmises, the correctness of which cannot be demonstrated, and which may in reality be very distant from the truth.†

* Ant Jud. viii. x. 1.

† The fine map of Zimmermann lays down at the very spot where we met the Adullams, the name *Dhullam*. There can be no doubt that this is intended to mean the same Arabs of whom we had the pleasure of casually encountering a few choice specimens. But which is the correct orthography of their name? Until more ample information is procured, I must take the liberty of maintaining that which I have deduced from my conversations on the spot with the Djahalins, whose territory is contiguous to that of the Adullams.

January 24th.

This morning when we rise the sky is only threatening. The clouds are scattered, and a pale cold sun, like the sun of the end of October in France, appears at intervals to throw a half-cheerful gleam upon the surrounding face of nature. Let us, then, hope that the day will at least be tolerable, and that we may arrive early at Hebron, without being thoroughly drenched by rain. I am the more anxious that it may prove so, as I have already bitterly reproached myself for my apathy of yesterday, though I feel that I was not without excuse. I have determined to resume my topographical survey of the country we are travelling through; and, with the help of Providence, I will complete my work, by uniting, as well as I am able, to the remainder of my map, the country intervening between this place and Jerusalem.

We are now in the centre of the country of the Djahalins; we therefore no longer require the escort of the faithful tribe, who, after the fatigues they have endured for so many days, have now but one predominant wish, that of returning to their tents as soon as possible. They ask permission to take leave of us this morning. Their Scheikh, though he feels, for reasons of his own, but a slight inclination to accompany us to Jerusalem, has determined to travel with us so far; as much, I am presumptuous enough to think, through personal regard for me, as because he is aware our purses are empty, and that we cannot give him the bakhshish to which he is entitled until we have paid a visit to our banker.

The question is how to distribute the pay so lawfully earned by our Djahalins, and we arrange this important matter before striking our camp. Each receives the full

number of piastres to which he is entitled, and in addition a new kafieh, with a supply of powder and ball. Our munificence excites the warm gratitude of these poor people, who, after having affectionately kissed our hands all round, hasten away, carrying on their expressive faces marks of regret at parting with us, almost equal to their joy at revisiting their own homes.

Before dismissing them I explored the elevated platform of Djenbeh, and took, as rapidly as possible, a survey of this interesting spot. At last everything is ready, the tents packed, and our luggage loaded on our mules and horses. We have taken our usually abstemious morning's meal; and by thirteen minutes past eight commence our march, in the hope of arriving in a very few hours at Hebron.

As I had intended, I resumed at starting my topographical task of the preceding days. The weather is cold and disagreeable, but it has not yet begun to rain; and I can go on with my work, from the moment of our departure from the encamping ground of Djenbeh. We proceed in a due northerly direction along the foot of the hill, on the top of which the town of Djenbeh* formerly stood. As we reach the northern point of this hill we descry, on the right and left banks of the small ravine we are following, and at the bottom of which is a running stream, some ruins and several caves, evidently excavated in the rock by human hands. A tolerably large defile then opens before us, running in a northerly direction, and ascending rapidly. We enter this pass, in which the stream takes rise that winds round the base of the hill of Djenbeh, and find it inter-

* The book of Joshua (xv. 53) mentions a town of Judah, situated on the mountain, and bearing the name of Janum (ינום). This is the only name having some analogy, though a very distant one, I confess, with the modern name of Djenbeh, actually borne by a mass of ruins most certainly contemporaneous with the Biblical times.

cepted, at right angles, by six or seven ancient walls of the roughest construction. On the left flank of this defile, the ascent of which is rather difficult, appear some scattered ruins. Towards the summit, a long and ancient wall borders the right of our path, on the flank of the hill on the same side.

Reaching the top of the ascent, by thirty-three minutes past eight we plunge into another defile, commanded on the left by a hill of no great height, and having on the right a breadth which does not exceed at first seventy-five yards, and narrows very rapidly until it becomes contracted to twenty-five yards. From this spot a steep, almost perpendicular, commences, dipping down into a very deep valley, called the Ouad-el-Merked, at the bottom of which we descry some well-cultivated fields. In this valley there are ruins called Kharbet-el-Merked, situated exactly at the foot of the cliff, but we are unable to distinguish them. These ruins bear nearly due east from Djenbeh.

I can discover in the Bible but a single place whose name presents any analogy to that of El-Merked; this is Makkedah, a city of the tribe of Judah,* enumerated amongst the cities of the plain. This city was conquered by Joshua (x. 28), who put all the inhabitants to the sword. Eusebius, at the word Μακηδα, and St. Jerome, both tell us that this city was eight miles distant from Eleutheropolis, to the eastward of that place, which must have been in the close neighbourhood of the modern Beit-Djibrin, if not on the very site of Beit-Djibrin itself. Josephus, when relating the exploits of Joshua, calls this same town Μακηδα.† I am much inclined to believe that our El-Merked is identical with the Makkedah of the Bible.

* Joshua, xv. 41. † Ant. Jud. v. i. 17.

By thirty-five minutes past eight we enter a ravine, running northward, the bottom of which we soon leave, to march along the flank of the hill on the left-hand side. By forty minutes past eight we march north-west, at a height of about five-and-thirty yards above the bed of the ravine; whilst we are still, as the crow flies, two hundred yards below the summit of the hill commanding the ravine on the right. By fifty-one minutes past eight our road turns north-north-west, then immediately west again, upon a flat three hundred yards wide, enclosed between two lines of rather elevated hills. By exactly nine o'clock we are marching north-west, and are in front of huge ruins that cover the western face of the hill, on the left hand, which we have been winding along for the last ten minutes. These ruins consist of long rows of primitive walls, crossing each other at right angles, and more than five hundred yards in length. Resting upon, and adjoining one of these walls, is a vast quadrangular enclosure. Beyond, a small plain, five hundred yards in extent, is strewed with ruins, and approached by several wide avenues of stones, placed upright, exactly similar to the king's highways we so often encountered in the Land of Moab.

These ruins, which it would be very desirable to examine with care and at full leisure, are called by the name of Kharbet-Omm-el-Arays (the Ruins of the Bride's Mother). By twelve minutes past nine they are still lying along the line of our march, and we pass by a double avenue of stones, in excellent preservation, for above thirty yards. Then a single avenue, turning to the north-west, through a small glen, thirty yards wide, leads up to a circular enclosure, constructed with very large stones, and crowning the summit of a high cliff, which we leave on our left. By

twenty-one minutes past nine we are marching nearly due north. For some time past large drops of an icy cold rain have annoyed us at intervals, but soon the clouds, violently impelled by the westerly wind, gather over our heads; then they burst suddenly, and we are half drowned in one of those Syrian squalls, of which no one can form an adequate idea unless he has been personally exposed to them. I am again compelled, sorely against my will, to give up my topographical survey, and replace in my pocket, with a sigh, my compass and memorandum-book, making up my mind, though with a heavy heart, to trust to memory for preserving the names of the important localities I may happen to pass through, as well as the exact time when they cross our route.

Before long I am mentally absolved for my forced laziness during the remainder of this day's march. The rain has become so violent, so incessant, and so intensely cold, that the exposure to its fury is a positive torture. Wrapping ourselves in our caoutchouc cloaks is a useless defence; in a few minutes we are soaked through to our very bones. With difficulty we retain a grasp of our bridles; the cold has almost deprived us of the use of our hands and feet. I give up the senseless ill-temper with which for hours I had exclaimed against the weather; it rains not one drop the less because I am exasperated; neither do my objurgations diminish my shivering. But let me do myself justice, nevertheless. The cold rain and blasts annoyed me less throughout this bitter day than the irrevocable loss of notes, in the midst of a country strewed round in all directions with the ruins of places celebrated in Holy Writ, and of which I only obtained a casual glance as we passed hurriedly along. From that moment I resolved to retrace

my steps once again over this ground, and to undertake, as soon as the weather would permit me, an investigation of the entire Land of Canaan. This resolution once taken, my regret became more tolerable; and then only I began to rail in real earnest against the cold and rain for the exclusive evils they contained in themselves.

Although I had made up my mind to return, I did not neglect asking the names of all the ruins I encountered on the road; and in this manner I collected the following notes, the value of which I fully appreciate now, having been compelled to give up my intended plan of exploring in detail, and at full leisure, this interesting country. I had been forced to abandon my survey at twenty-one minutes past nine. By forty-eight minutes past nine we passed, distant about a hundred yards on our right, a hill entirely covered with ruins; this hill and these ruins are called the Djebel and the Kharbet-Mayn.

We find in Joshua (xv. 55), amongst the cities of the hilly region of Judah, Maon, Carmel, Ziph, and Jutta. The Maon (מעון) mentioned in this verse is certainly no other place than the Kharbet-Mayn, in front of which we have just passed. From the tenor of this verse it appears that Maon was in the vicinity of Carmel and Ziph, and we shall soon see that this statement is quite correct. In the first book of Samuel (xxiii. 24 and 25), it is written: "And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul; but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon." "25. Saul also and his men went to seek him, and they told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon." Further

on we read again (xxv. 2): "And there was a man in Maon whose possessions were in Carmel: and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats; and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel." These verses taken together tend to prove again, not only that Maon and Carmel were in the vicinity of each other, but also that the country in which Maon was situated was a wilderness. Certainly this country has not improved since; it is still an actual desert, the aspect of which must be most melancholy, even in fine weather; the reader may judge how it appeared to me under a cold, drenching rain. Another word concerning Maon: Eusebius says that this city was situated in the eastern part of the Daroma; and it is essential to remember that this was the name given to the southern part of the territory of Judah.

By ten o'clock we find ourselves in front of a mound covered with ruins, distant about a hundred yards to the right of our road. These ruins are called Kharbet-Omm-el-Aamid (the Ruins of the Mother of Columns). It is perfectly evident that this denomination, entirely modern, can be of no aid to us in the endeavour to ascertain the original name of this locality.

By fifty minutes past ten we are close to other considerable remains, the name of which is unknown to the Arabs accompanying me; and at last, by exactly eleven o'clock, we pass directly through the centre of the ruins of Carmel. A square building of the middle ages commands from its exceeding height the vast space occupied by this ancient city. At the foot of this citadel, the construction of which dates most likely from the period of the Crusades, are lying several fine broken shafts of columns, and a capital, which has been used to ornament the side-post of a gate.

A magnificent cistern is excavated in the rock, at a level a little lower than that of the flat hill upon which the castle stands. Streets extend to a considerable distance, having on both sides contiguous ruins of houses of a very remote antiquity. A detailed examination of this place could not fail to produce results of the highest importance. What I saw of it was, unfortunately, a hasty glance, while seeking refuge behind the castle for a few minutes to shelter myself from the incessant rain by which we had been pelted without mercy for nearly two hours; and even in doing this I had taken good care not to alight from my horse, for had I done so I should never have been able to mount again.

Carmel, as we have already stated, is mentioned amongst the cities of the tribe of Judah,* as being in the neighbourhood of Maon. The present ruins of Maon and Carmel are distant from each other little more than the interval of an hour's march; that is to say, about a league and a half, or two leagues at the utmost (between four and six English miles). This town continued to maintain its importance down to the period of the Roman dominion, and even to a late date under that empire; for we read in the "Notitia Dignitatum Imperii:" *Equites scutarii Illyriciani Chermulæ.* ("The Illyrian cavalry, with the shield armour, were garrisoned in Chermula,") which is unquestionably identical with our Carmel: and, accordingly, Eusebius, in his Onomasticon, at the word Κάρμηλος, tells us that a Roman garrison was stationed at that place.

Leaving Carmel, we fall in again with enormous avenues of stones, of exactly the same description as those we saw

* Joshua, xv. 55.

in the Land of Moab, with this difference, that the blocks employed are no longer composed of lava. These avenues appear on every side, intersecting the ground right and left of the road we are following, which is here a well-defined tract; they wind along the flanks of the hills, and descend into valleys planted with a small kind of ilex or holm-oak. All around may be seen remains and fragments of a very early period. For instance, an hour after having left Carmel, we pass through the ruins of a city; but we have neither leisure nor courage enough to examine them. Only one object attracts our attention as we pass; a well, hewn in the rock, with a brim and trough, both cut out of a single mass. This well is evidently of the highest antiquity; but I find it impossible to ascertain the name of the town. Every man in the caravan moves on, thinking of himself alone, wrapped up as closely as possible in whatever he can think of, to screen himself from the cold and rain. It is quite useless to address a question to our Arabs; they either cannot hear, or more probably they do not choose to listen, for fear they should be obliged to give me a decided answer. This horrible day is our retreat from Moscow, and has entirely routed our little army.

A few paces further on, a hillock is pointed out to me, distant a few hundred yards to the right of our road, and covered with ruins. This is Ziph, whose original name (זִיף) has not undergone the slightest alteration. The 55th verse of chapter xv. of Joshua, as the reader will remember, only contains the four names, Maon, Carmel, Ziph, and Juttah. We might suppose that these places would have been enumerated in this verse in the same order as that in which they are situated in the land, proceeding from south to north. But in that case Juttah should be looked for to

the north of Ziph, which is contrary to the relative position of both. Zimmermann's map lays down towards this point a single place called Jukin; and, notwithstanding that the two names begin with same syllable, it would be difficult to find any identity between the biblical Juttah and the modern Jukin. This becomes also the more difficult when we consider that Juttah still exists at no great distance westward of Carmel, but very far from and to the south-south-west of Ziph.

The name of Ziph is applied in common to two scriptural localities of the tribe of Judah. We find* at the southern extremity of the territory of Judah, and in the vicinity of Adadah and Kedesh, a place called Ziph, which evidently cannot be confounded with the one situated in the vicinity of Hebron and Carmel. Eusebius tells us that this last town (of the name of Ziph) was eight miles distant from Hebron, in the Daroma; but the figures seem to me to have undergone some alteration, and I believe the number of miles to be exaggerated. Josephus† mentions Ziph under the name of Σιφὰ as amongst the first towns which Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, ordered to be fortified in the land of Judah. We read in the same book another passage, which is extremely important.‡ It tells us that David, after having started from the solitude above En-Gedi (Ενγεδαὶν) came into the country of Ziph (Τῆς Σιφήνης), to a place called Kænè (εἴς τινα τόπον Καινὴν καλουμένην). I am much tempted to look for the Kænè of Josephus in the modern Jukin, situated so close to Ziph.

The country of Ziph was far from flourishing at the scriptural period, for we read in Samuel (Book I., xxiii.): "14. And David abode in the wilderness in strongholds,

* Joshua, xv. 24. † Ant. Jud. viii. x. 1. ‡ Ant. Jud. vi. xiii. 2.

and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand." "15. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph, in a wood" at Harsah (בחרשה).* Lastly (chap. xxiii. v. 19), we read again: "Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the wood (at Harsah), in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?" (or of the desert, for the word Jeshimon has also that signification.)

Beginning from the spot where we are in sight of the ruins of Ziph, we enter a mountainous, green-looking, well-wooded country. All the hill-sides are covered with holm-oaks. Many ruins appear everywhere along the road, and from time to time we spy on the heights some Arabs watching numerous flocks of sheep and goats. The weather has not cleared, but quite the contrary. The nearer we approach Hebron, the rain has become more diluvian. At last, by one o'clock, after having passed in front of a miserable-looking building, bearing the pompous name of *Lazaretto*, and also an immense cistern hewn in the rock, between a vast Mussulman burying-ground and the western point of the town, we enter Hebron by a small postern, giving access to a street, narrower, dirtier, worse paved, and more winding than even the streets of Jerusalem; it is, in fact, a deformed repetition of Naplous.

Under the guidance of Matteo, we went to take up our quarters in a small, cold, damp house, but tolerably clean,

* I give here an observation of Cohen's concerning this name:—"According to some people, this is the name of a place in the desert of Ziph at *Horscha*; but, according to the Chaldean version, this word means *forest*, in the desert of Ziph, *in the forest*," or, according to the English received version, "in a wood." The abundant holm-oaks covering the sides of the valleys throughout this tract of country render this version extremely probable.

where we heartily congratulated ourselves on our arrival. An immense brazier, full of burning charcoal, is brought to us in a few moments; we hasten to throw off the clothes which the rain has thoroughly penetrated, and occasioned to adhere to our bodies, and dry ourselves as quickly as we can, with the door wide open; a necessary precaution, to avoid being suffocated by the effects of the charcoal. We take a hasty breakfast, drinking much coffee, and smoking many chibouks, and in about an hour feel ourselves considerably refreshed. It was high time, for since the morning our spirits had declined lamentably towards the point of zero.

As it is impossible to stir a foot out of doors, and we have been sufficiently drenched for the day, we give up all idea of examining Hebron at present, the more willingly that we purpose repeating our visit; another instance, as it often happens, in proof of the superior wisdom we should have evinced in bearing the rain a few minutes longer, so as to obtain at least a general idea of the aspect of this city. What knowledge I could obtain amounts to little. Hebron occupies the bottom of a tolerably wide valley, the sides of which are planted with vineyards and fine olive-trees. To the eastward the town rises a little on the side of the hill, on which stands the mosque, inaccessible to all but Mussulmen. It is said that this mosque contains the celebrated vault of Machpelah, in which were interred the bodies of Sarah, and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Let me dwell for a few moments on the origin of Hebron; a town frequently named by the sacred historians. We read in Genesis (xxiii. 2): "And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron, in the land of Canâan; and Abraham

came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." "19. And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre: the same is Hebron, in the land of Canâan." "20. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place by the sons of Heth." The plain of Mamre is mentioned in another passage.* "Then Abraham removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord." From the concordance of these two passages, an evident conclusion results, that the plain of Mamre was precisely the site of the eastern portion of the present town of Hebron. And, lastly, the vale of Hebron is mentioned again in the 14th verse of chapter xxxvii of Genesis.

The antiquity of the city of Hebron is determined by a scriptural passage: † "Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan, in Eygpt." Zoan, or Tsâan, is unquestionably the same as Tanis; but unfortunately, this text does not state when Tanis was built. Hebron was given as an inheritance to Caleb, son of Jephunneh. ‡ The Bible tells us also that Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, on the mountain, was chosen for one of the cities of Refuge. § And, lastly, the great piscina, or pond, which we noticed on our entrance into Hebron, is also mentioned in the Bible; for we read: ‖ "And David commanded his young men, and they slew them; and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner, in Hebron." A fish-pond, like the piscina which

* Genesis, xiii. 18. † Numbers, xiii. 22. ‡ Joshua, xiv. 13, 14.
§ Joshua, xx. 7. ‖ 2 Samuel, iv. 12.

exists at Hebron in the present day, was unquestionably there at a very remote period.

An entire chapter might be written on the history of Hebron, bringing together in proper order all the facts dispersed through the Bible and in the sacred and profane writings; but as such an undertaking would exceed the limit I have proposed for this work, I must therefore rest contented with referring the reader to the original sources; besides which, Reland has collected, in reference to the word *Chebron*, the greater portion of the passages which might be quoted here. I therefore dispense with the repetition of a summary which has already been given from a higher authority, and with deeper scientific research than I can possibly claim for myself. I shall merely remark, in conclusion, that Hebron has received from the Mussulmen the name of El-Khalil (the friend or beloved of the Lord), in commemoration of the patriarch Abraham, who bears especially amongst them the name of El-Khalil.

Towards the close of the day we were visited by a high and mighty chieftain, who was introduced to us by the Scheikhs Abou-Daouk and Hamdan. This is no less a personage than the Scheikh Abd-Allah, who exercises a sovereignty nearly absolute over all the Arabian tribes dispersed through the country of Hebron. He is extremely polite and obliging in his offers of service, in case we should be disposed to return to Hebron, and to establish there our head-quarters, with the intention of exploring the neighbouring country. We accept his proffered civilities with deep gratitude, and fully intend taking advantage of the favourable disposition of this distinguished potentate.

To-day I have presented to our excellent friend Hamdan a tolerably good sword, my first-rate double-barrelled gun,

and my pocket-pistols, in token of my gratitude for his faithful services. The honest Scheikh can scarcely restrain the overwhelming joy which over-powers him, and has a hard struggle to maintain the cold and dignified bearing imperiously commanded by Arab decorum under all circumstances, whether of happiness or misfortune. It is perfectly evident that we have powerfully stimulated the pride of the Scheikh of the Thâameras by placing in his hands these fine specimens of arms, which he will soon contrive to put out of order, but which nevertheless will still continue to excite the admiration of all the Bedouins he may ever after meet with.

The fatigue of the day's march has been such that we are all anxious to retire to rest. Dinner and notes are soon despatched, and then every man stretches himself upon his cot, with the joyful reflection that to-morrow we shall once more re-enter Jerusalem.

Before dinner, Matteo brought to me a kind of small box or chest of white marble, having the form of a sarcophagus, and bearing on one of its faces a double cross, with arms of equal length. This kind of funeral urn, with three compartments, is the property of our host. According to his account, it was discovered in one of the numerous sepulchral caves excavated on the sides of the hills that surround Hebron. I feel some longing to purchase the curious relic, but I suspect the possessor is likely to set too high a value upon it, judging by the admiration he loudly expresses. However, after some negotiation, carried on by Matteo, I succeed in purchasing the urn for sixty piastres, upon which, most likely, Matteo has levied a lawful tithe, after the established custom of every dragoman in all bargains concluded for his employer.

January 25th, 1851.

We have passed an excellent night, notwithstanding the incessant howling of the jackals, who seem to be quite domesticated in the streets of Hebron. We have slept like so many logs of wood, and still I have some recollection that I heard the door of our room, which opens by merely touching it with your finger, creaking upon its hinges. Who can have been our nocturnal visitor? I cannot guess, and at first am not much inclined to inquire; nothing has disappeared, all is in its right place: but, abomination of the wilderness! the reader may remember that Papigny had killed a pretty humming-bird in the Rhôr-Safieh, and that I had appropriated to myself the feathery remains of the poor little creature. In addition to this, between Er-Ramaïl and Djenbeh, Belly had shot another beautiful bird, something like a partridge, but yellow in colour, and with a brown rim round the neck. The remains of both were reserved for the scalpel of the naturalist, and Belly intended to dissect them with great care as soon as we should arrive at Jerusalem. And now a wretched cat, even a greater admirer of birds than ourselves, has stolen in secretly, and feasted upon both our treasures, thus saving our friend the pleasure he had anticipated. This was the intruder I heard prowling about our room, like a thief in the night; and of our two highly-valued acquirements, he has left us nothing but a few feathers, and some odd fragments of legs, as melancholy reminiscences. I writhe with vexation on discovering this mysterious iniquity; I abuse everybody, be they never so innocent, and vow deadly vengeance on the perpetrator, if chance will only throw him in my way. But, after a little reflection, I consider that were I to rave until

to-morrow, it would not bring back either a leg or a feather of the two lost birds; I therefore adopt the wiser course of restraining my useless anger, and if I indulge in it, I do so internally and without display.

We have neither time nor inclination to tarry long in Hebron; on the contrary, we are most impatient to return to Jerusalem. Accordingly, we mount our horses and resume our journey, on a fair, clear, but bitter cold morning. We leave the town by the same gate through which we entered it yesterday; passing again along the large pond which I have already mentioned; then we turn to the right, between the pond and the Mohammedan burying-ground, through a grove of magnificent olive-trees, and soon find ourselves on a paved ascent—in all probability the ancient high-road from Hebron to Jerusalem. This ascent is now transformed into a torrent, occupying the whole breadth of the road, and impetuously rolling down to the bottom of the valley of Hebron; a rush of waters inundating all the surrounding country, and produced by the incessant rains of the last few days.

To the right and left of the road are beautiful vine-yards, interspersed frequently with huts and round towers, consisting, no doubt, of working stations and watch-houses, intended to accommodate those who are placed there for the protection of property. This mode of watching is not of recent invention in Judæa, for the prophet Isaiah informs us that in his day it was already in use. We read at chap. i. ver. 8, "And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard." And, further on, chap. v. ver. 1, 2, "Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and

gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." Here, again, we have another proof that nothing changes in this country; the customs of thirty centuries ago are in use to this day, and exactly after the same fashion. As soon as we have reached the upper levels, we encounter, to the left of our road, perceptible ruins called Kharbet-er-Ram, and a little further on, others named Kharbet-en-Nasara. What Rama can this be? I am unable to answer. As to the ruins bearing the name of En-Nasara (the Christians), they might be supposed to owe their origin to the Crusades; but I am far from asserting that such is the case. To assign with any degree of certainty to a ruined locality in this country, an origin so comparatively modern, would require a much more detailed investigation than I was able to bestow in the present instance.

As we proceed, we perceive on our right the village of Halhoul, and some time after, towards the east, that of Ech-Chioukh. Here there are no grounds for doubt: we have certainly before us a biblical station which is named in Joshua (xv. 58) amongst the cities of the hill country of Judah—Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor. A modern village of Beth-zur still exists, at a short distance westward of Halhoul; and to the north-west of this same village we reach, some minutes later, another called Ed-Deroueh, which may possibly have taken the place of the scriptural Gedor. Still further on, and to the right of the road, other extensive ruins appear, called Abou-fid, having every appearance of a remote origin.

Passing in front of a village situated at some distance

from the left of our road, and named Beit-Oummar, we arrive at the entrance of a delightful valley, planted with fine trees shading a fountain called Bir-el-Hadji-Ramadan. This valley is called Ouad-el-Biar (the valley of the wells), so named on account of some large wells that are found in the neighbourhood, and in all probability of very ancient origin, for the labour of their construction was certainly never undertaken by the Arabs of the living generation. When we reach the bottom of the Ouad-el-Biar, the road winds up the curtain of hills that encloses the valley, through naked rocks and narrow paths, almost impassable for horses. After meeting several remnants of ancient buildings, we arrive at the crest of a mountain, from which you discover immediately under your feet, to the right, and at the bottom of a green-looking valley, several ruined enclosures, bearing the name of Deïr-el-Benat. A convent of nuns has evidently existed here at the period of the Crusades. A little further on, to the westward, we see the village of Ertas,* and in front, a fortress of the middle ages still in tolerable repair. This is the Qalâat-el-Bourak. Before coming to this fortress we pass three enormous cisterns, known to travellers under the name of the reservoirs or tanks of Solomon; and, lastly, to the north-west of the Qalâat-el-Bourak, an important structure appears called El-Khoudr—an ancient convent dedicated to St. George. The view from this high

* Might not the village of Ertas be identified with the Arethusa mentioned by Josephus (Ant. Jud. XIV. iv. 4) as having been conquered from the Jews by Pompey the Great, and afterwards restored to its inhabitants with Marissa, Azoth, and Jamnia. Josephus, in this same passage, says that these towns were all in the interior of the land, and since Marissa must have been in the vicinity of the spot in question, it is very possible that the modern Ertas should be the Ἀρέθουσα of Josephus. This historian repeats the same notice of Arethusa in his narrative of the Jewish war (I. vii. 7).

ground is beautiful and extensive, and such as you may gaze on for hours without weariness.

We should have been delighted to halt here for breakfast, with such a panorama under our eyes; but it is equally necessary and agreeable to have water to drink when you are engaged in eating, and this elementary consideration determined us to descend to the foot of the walls of the Qalâat-el-Bourak, where an abundant spring, that contributes its share towards filling the reservoirs of Solomon, promised all the refreshment we could look for in the desert. In a few minutes we arrived: our carpet was spread exactly above the fountain; we stretched ourselves upon the turf, and did ample credit to our half-starved fowls and hard-boiled eggs, whilst we dwelt most complacently on the thought that we were about to re-enter Jerusalem, and to enjoy at least a few days' rest, of which the whole party stood greatly in need.

During our repast, the Turkish governor of the castle, at the foot of which we had established ourselves, came forth from the fort, on horseback, accompanied by three or four other Turks of the old school, dressed according to the ancient costume. These gentlemen were going out for an airing; they did not condescend to favour us with the slightest attention, and we returned their politeness by similar neglect. Our scheikhs especially, when looking at them as they passed, assumed an expression of profound contempt, which those who were the object of this demonstration could scarcely construe into a mark of deference, however their self-love might dictate to them to do so. In this country the Turks affect to despise the Arabs, of whom in reality they stand in dread; whilst the Arabs thoroughly despise the Turks, and never fail expressing this feeling when they find themselves beyond the walls of

Jerusalem. This means in point of fact that the Ottoman dominion extends as far as the city walls, but beyond this barrier it exists only by the sufferance of the Bedouin tribes. It requires no very profound prophet to foretell that, ere long, the Turkish race will be entirely expelled from all the countries where the Arab is the indigenous offspring of the soil. These reflections passed across my mind as we were breakfasting by the side of Solomon's tanks, though I little expected at the moment, that in less than two years, the same Scheikh Abd-Allah, whose visit I had received in Hebron, would take permanent possession of that town, expelling all the Turks who had hitherto exercised the sovereignty there: and that the Pacha of Jerusalem, on issuing out with such troops as he could collect, to repress the rebellion, would receive a lesson when half-way to teach him to keep quiet henceforth in the head-quarters of his pashalic; and that he would hasten back to Jerusalem, to shut himself up in that strong-hold, much faster than he had sallied forth.

After an hour's delay, close to the Qalâat-el-Bourak, we mount our horses again and resume our march. We soon cross the Ouad-et-Thâamera, and here, the last of our faithful followers halt, to take leave of us and return to their tents. Hamdan and Abou-Daouk alone remain. Leaving Bethlehem on our right, we pass within sight of the villages of Beit-Djala,* of Nahhalin, of Er-Bezeth,† of Beit-Safafa, and of Malcha, this last giving

* Beit-Djala is most likely the Giloh (גלה) mentioned amongst the cities in the mountains, of the tribe of Judah (Joshua xv. 51). In close connection with Giloh, the same verse mentions the village of Holon (חלן) which I am much tempted to identify with the village of Nahhalin, situated so close to Beit-Djala. [This identity is the more probable as the syllable Nah is evidently here a corruption of the article; Nah-halin is no other than En-Halin. *Note by the Translator.*]

† Er-Bezeth is perhaps the place where Bacchides encamped on his way from

its name to the Ouad-el-Maleha. All these localities are situated on the hills to our left, from which we are increasing our distance, to fall in again with the road to Bethlehem, at the spot where stands the tomb of Rachel. We observed on the heights situated at a few thousand yards to the westward of the line of villages mentioned above, a station called El-Kabou, close to which is another small village named El-Howaladjah. Matteo informs me, that at a distance of half-an-hour's march from El-Kabou, there is a village called Battir, containing a fine fountain ;—to the right of Battir, and on the height commanding this village, there are ruins. Lastly, between El-Kabou and Jerusalem, is the convent of St. John, not far from which are the ruins of Modeïm, the native land of the Maccabees ; their mausoleum was erected there, ornamented with pyramids, of which the historian Josephus has left us a pompous description.

I learnt also from Matteo that at the distance of a few leagues in a due westerly direction from El-Bourak, there is a village with ruins, called Choueïkah. This is unquestionably the Socoh of the translators of the Bible, mentioned in verse 35, chapter xv of Joshua, as amongst the cities of the plain ; since this Socoh (שוכח, *properly* Chouïkah), is named with Jarmuth, as lying in close vicinity to each other ; and since also there exists in the immediate neighbourhood of Choueïkah, a village which is still called Jarmuth.

Let us not omit to observe that we find enumerated amongst the cities of the mountainous districts of Judah another Socoh (verse 48), as also Shamir, and Jattir.

Jerusalem (1 Maccabees lxxv. 19). The name of this place is written Βηζέθ or Βηζαέθ ; but Josephus writes it Βηθζηθώ (Ant. Jud. XII. xi. 1), and tells us that Bacchides came to attack Judas Maccabæus, who was encamped on this spot.

There can be no confusion between these two localities of the same name. Might not the second one be identified with the present village of Ech-Chioukh, which is situated eastward of Halhoul? I leave this question to be decided by more learned heads than my own.

We have now almost reached Jerusalem—heaven be praised!—as the day is already far advanced, we have no time to lose, if we wish to find the gates of the city still open. We therefore push on, and proceed at a rapid pace; not so fast, nevertheless, but that an Arab on foot contrives to get ahead of us: he is running as if for a wager, and whilst passing, mutters a few words to our scheikhs, which I cannot understand. They appear to me to assume thoughtful countenances on this communication. I hasten to inquire the cause, and receive the following answer. If the foot messenger who has just overtaken us —and who has travelled from Hebron to Jerusalem in four hours and a half—does not arrive in time to deliver to the authorities a letter written by the director of the lazaretto in Hebron, certifying that we are not *an arrival from Egypt without a clean bill of health*, we shall be placed under quarantine for five days, outside the city walls. "But this is absurd," we exclaim; "are we coming from Egypt?" "What does it signify?" is the simultaneous answer of both Hamdan and Abou-Daouk. "Since they know not whence we come, they will assert in preference that we are direct from El-Arish; and for the simple reason that we are alive, whilst, if we had gone to Karak, we should certainly never have returned at all."

Luckily, the director of the lazaretto of Hebron was a worthy individual, who, foreseeing the annoyance we were likely to meet with at our entrance into Jerusalem, had despatched a good runner who, for the remuneration of a

few piastres, was carrying our *clean bill of health* to the sanitary authorities of the sacred city.

As we continue our march as fast as possible, we meet some Bethlehemites at Mar-Elias, on their way from Jerusalem, who confirm the agreeable intelligence that we are doomed to sleep five nights more under canvas. The dragoman, Francis, who had started from Hebron early in the morning, and long in advance of us, to provide our lodgings, has been placed, by way of preliminary, under quarantine at the Bab-el-Khalil, — where he is closely guarded, as if he were actually infected with the plague, which he is not. The reader may imagine how anxious and angry we are at the same time: at length, we traverse the intervening distance, and reach the city gate. Francis has just been restored to liberty, and we are permitted to enter freely, thanks to our good runner from Hebron. I give the poor fellow twenty piastres, and he considers himself royally paid for his trouble, though the reward is not much.

The first person I set my eyes upon is our kind friend the Abbé Michon, who having returned only a few hours before us, from his excursion to Beyrout, has come to wait our arrival at the gate by which we are expected to enter, as soon as he heard that our dragoman, Francis, had made his appearance in Jerusalem. He had been already greeted with the unwelcome intelligence of our deaths, which had been currently reported as certain for a week. Even our friend, M. Botta, was not without some anxiety respecting our fate; he had been unable to procure any information as to what had become of us, and this absolute silence afforded him deep subject for anxiety on the probable issue of our adventurous expedition; but now here we are, reappearing unexpectedly, all in excellent health, and

delighted with the unhoped-for result of a most successful journey.

After the first embraces, the dear Abbé hastened to give me news of my son, whom he had seen embark at Beyrout, in a satisfactory state of health. I, therefore, made my second entrance into the Holy City with a light heart. As we had been dissatisfied with the accommodations of the Hôtel Meshulam, we now determined to look for quarters at the Franciscan convent, or Casa Nuova, where we were received with that frank cordiality which gives additional value to the unpretending hospitality of the worthy fathers. The Abbé was already installed in a cell; a number of small double-bedded rooms were immediately assigned to us, of which we took possession as gaily as possible. Our chambers were contiguous, and opened on the same uncovered gallery, admitting the pure air of Heaven; we are thus all together, and lodged as comfortably as travellers can expect to be in Jerusalem. The only objection we can find to these rooms is, that having occupied them during the rainy season, they are dreadfully damp. But as it would be unfair to charge the good fathers with the inclemency of the weather, I can but repeat, from the bottom of my heart, the assurance of my sincere gratitude, as I have already expressed it when I parted with them, perhaps never to meet again.

The ordinary fare of the convent is rather meagre; but how can it be otherwise, when we consider that this venerable establishment distributes gratis, for a month, the most unreserved hospitality to all comers. We were a little too sensual to content ourselves with the frugal repasts provided according to the regulations of the convent; and as we intended to retain our trusty Matteo in our service for the remainder of the journey, he was, at

our request, put in possession of an under room, which he converted into a kitchen, and we continued, as before, to live upon fowls and mutton. It is true, that very often we went, by way of compensation, to dine at the excellent table of our kind consul, at whose house we passed nearly all our evenings, except when it rained so heavily that it became impossible to stir beyond the doors.

We tried, after dinner, to obtain heat, by means of an enormous brazier filled with burning coals; but it gave us such headaches, that, wishing to live a little longer, now that we have escaped from the devil's clutches, we firmly resolve never again to have recourse to this implement of furniture, admirably suited to all hypochondriacs who prefer voluntary death by asphyxia. Let the cold be as intense as it may, we shall in future only warm our fingers at the fire of our kind friend the consul.

At last, we are at liberty to undress in earnest, after being deprived of this seasonable luxury for many days. Once more we lie down upon real beds; alas! that these should happen to be as damp as if the sheets had been dipped in a cistern! We have no escape from one of two risks: either we must now encounter hydropathic treatment to cure rheumatism in perspective, or we must give ourselves an acute fit of rheumatism, in the hope of curing it at some future day, by a course of hydropathy. In either case, we resign ourselves to Providence. The beds before us are substantial, and not imaginary; and this consideration prevailing over all others, we hasten to get over the first unpleasant sensations, and soon fall asleep, as people are sure to sleep after more than twenty days of campaigning and bivouac.

JERUSALEM, *from January 26th to February 5th.*

I shall here again dispense with the rather uninteresting

diary of our residence in Jerusalem. A few words will suffice to give the reader a general idea of our ordinary avocations. After breakfast, when the weather permits, we run to the monuments we are most anxiously intent upon studying; these are the area of the ancient temple, and the tombs, or sepulchral caverns, that surround the city. The morning is employed in measuring and sketching on the ground. If it rains so hard that there is no possibility of venturing beyond the walls, I remain at home in the Casa Nuova, where I classify the collection of rocks we have picked up in the region of the Dead Sea; at other times, I fill in my drawings in Indian ink, or study the interesting work of Quaresmius. Nearly all our evenings are spent at M. Botta's, at whose house we invariably find the most friendly and polite reception. Sometimes, also, we pass a few hours in the drawing-room of M. Pizzamano, a society presided over with accomplished grace by Madame Pizzamano.

On the evening of February 3rd, Matteo treated us to an Arab *Soirée*, with the obligato accompaniment of kettle-drums and tambourines; some of the musicians, without any apparent object, striking out suddenly into a gurgling, snuffling chant, unlike anything that ever was heard in the shape of a song. The melody and the accompaniment were sadly at variance with each other. In compliment to us, as Frenchmen, on our entering the concert-room, the orchestra commenced clanging and tambourining a strange incongruous imitation of the *Marseillaise*, and I confess that my vanity, as a European dilettante and performer, received a cruel shock. If it is by this sample, executed in such a manner, that French music is estimated in Jerusalem, we must pass for ignorant pretenders, without ear enough to distinguish one tune from another, and

destitute of taste to perceive the difference between good and bad.

During two long hours we suffered this infliction, forming the centre of a group of male faces, young and old, smoking the chibouk and drinking wine, water, or coffee, according as the invited guest happened to be a Christian or a Mussulman. As Matteo is a Christian, the majority is not on the side of the followers of Mahomet. Sweatmeats, or pastry mixed up with honey, are introduced between the acts of the concert. To give a greater animation to the performance, or rather, to stimulate the ardour of the musicians, Mohammed, who is squatting on the floor by my side, exhorts me to bestow a largess. I therefore send, in the name of the whole party, fifty piastres to each of the musicians,—a reward infinitely beyond his merit. From this moment the clashing, jarring and screaming, redouble in vigour. I should have much preferred, had the performers acknowledged our bakshish in a different manner, and shown their thankfulness and good deserts by remaining silent.

We anxiously desire to release ourselves from the lengthened enjoyments of this male *Soirée*, but we have not yet been presented with the nosegay, without which it is impossible to stir. The mistress of the house, with all the female portion of the society congregated at Matteo's, though completely excluded from our sight, are busily employed in the preparation of this premeditated bouquet. When the long-expected object is brought in, it looks like a whitish mass, as large as a huge mole-hill, surmounted with flowers, small lighted candles, and little scraps of tinsel. It has an imposing look, I confess, and yet I ask myself what it is. As this strange compound is placed before me, without anything in the shape of a spoon or fork, I must

give up all reserve and attack it with my fingers. It proves to be a mixture of flour, sugar, pounded almonds, and I don't know how many ingredients besides; but I suspect that, amongst other components, a goodly allowance of tallow-candle is not wanting. The article in question is called a *Kenafeh*. In Jerusalem there is no such thing as a festival without a Kenafeh; but at the same time, there is no Kenafeh unless it be a real festival.

I should much prefer not being compelled to eat a large portion of this incongruous mess; but the good people appear little disposed to take it away in a hurry; they are much too polite for that. There is, however, one honour which I most resolutely refuse; that of tasting the little round balls our neighbours are continually rolling between their fingers, and then politely presenting to you. I conceal under a pretence of absolute want of appetite the horrible disgust caused by this proffered luxury, and allow my poor friend Edward to pay for us both, by swallowing all that is offered by the entire company. I confess, the grimaces I see him make whilst undergoing the operation, do not dispose me in any way to relax in my affected abstinence. After this ceremony we are suffered to retire from the party, and leave our gracious hosts to enjoy their merry-making after their own fancies. We break up the sitting and return to the Casa Nuova, where at least we have no more Kenafeh to encounter.

On going out, Matteo presents to us in the court-yard, and in grand form, Madame Matteo, who is, let me speak the truth, a very pretty woman, with whom we exchange by turns a farewell salutation, whilst to the master of the house we leave a bakshish of three hundred piastres, not to be behind-hand in generosity with our faithful servant.

The next day, February the 4th, has been entirely

employed in visiting the monument called the "Tomb of the Kings," Q'bour-el-Molouk, or Q'bour-el-Selathin. Up to the present time this is the object we have most admired of all we have seen, having discovered in it three stone lids of sarcophagi, which would be invaluable in such a museum as that of the Louvre. Henceforward we are continually revolving in our minds the means by which we may obtain possession of and carry off these precious remains of Judaic art. But, before anything else, we must thoroughly examine the monument itself, and ascertain if it is really entitled to the name it bears. We are not long in forming our convictions in this respect, and soon arrive at the moral certitude that, in entering this wonderful cave, we have stood in the sepulchre of David and of the kings of his dynasty.

But this is not yet the time or place to examine the question with the attention it deserves, and I propose to treat it *in extenso* in a special chapter a little further on; when, setting aside the manner and style of a traveller who transcribes the daily routine of his journey, I shall arrange under a separate head the results of my observations on all the particular monuments contained within the walls of Jerusalem, or which, from their close vicinity to the space so circumscribed, unquestionably belong to the history of the capital of the kings of Judah.

We were impatient to continue our survey of the Dead Sea, and to examine attentively the northern point of this extraordinary lake. With this object we had held conferences with the scheikhs, who usually undertake, for a bakshish of a hundred piastres per head for each traveller, to conduct pilgrims to Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, and to protect them against any attack during this excursion, which is generally accomplished within three days. These people are, Hat-Allah, scheikh of the village

of Siloam, and the two brothers Mahmoud and Mustafa, schiekhs of the village of Abou-Dis, situated to the right of the Fountain of the Apostles, or Bir-el-Haoud, on the heights commanding the valley that leads to Jericho, and about a thousand yards distant beyond Bethany. Hat-Allah is a little old man, still plump and active, having preserved much of the energy and alacrity of youth. The two scheikhs of Abou-Dis are, especially Mahmoud, fine manly fellows, always with a smile on their lips, and of a kindness and fidelity superior to any trial. These three personages engage to provide us with a sufficient escort, chosen from amongst the people under their sway. As we purpose examining the shore of the Asphaltic Lake, as far as the spot where we first reached it, that is to say, as far as the Aÿn-el-Rhoueyr, we must necessarily take a little more than the usual time for our journey, and cannot treat with our scheikhs on the footing of ordinary travellers. Our agreement is soon settled; and by doubling the amount of piastres, we may, if we choose, double the number of days to be occupied on the march.

We mutually exchange *rendezvous* for the 5th of February, early in the morning, before the door of the Casa Nuova. Matteo has received his orders; our provisions are ready, all our luggage packed, and we wait with restless impatience the hour of departure, anxious to complete the exploring expedition, of which we have already accomplished so important a portion.

END OF VOL. I.

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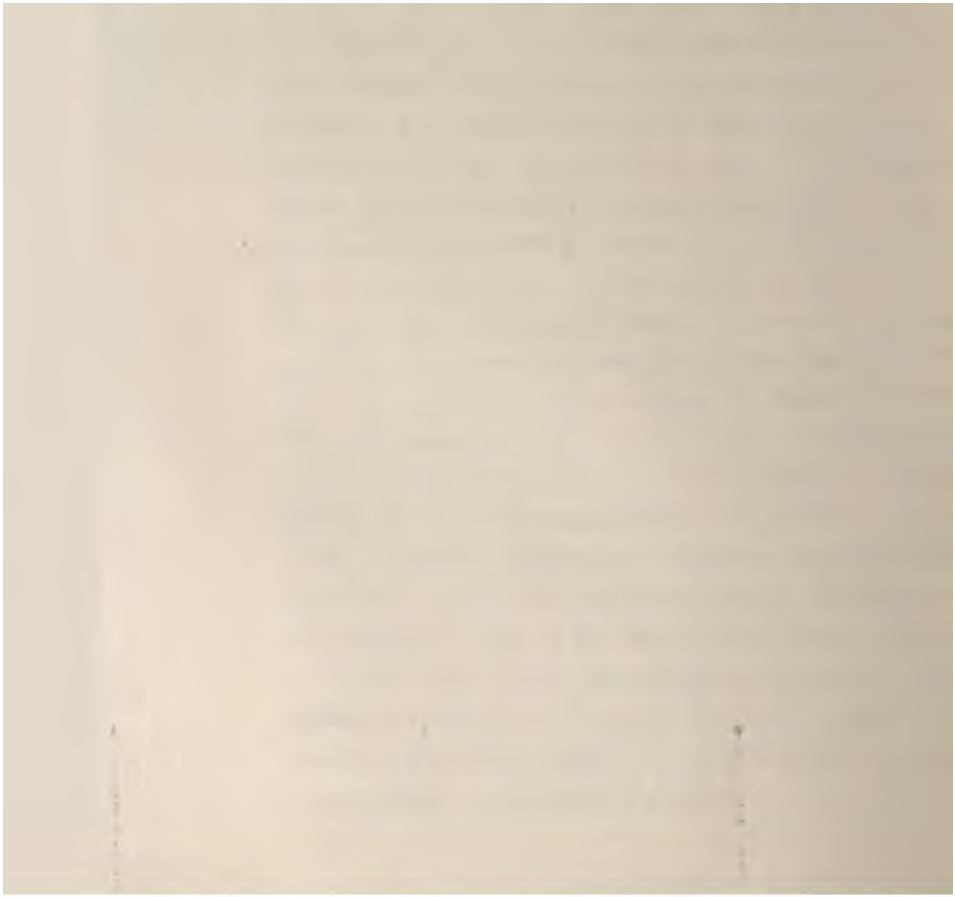

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